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OF EUROPE  
ALLEN UPWARD



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# THE EAST END OF EUROPE









"YOUNG TURKS."

Frontispiece]

# THE EAST END OF EUROPE

THE REPORT OF AN UNOFFICIAL MISSION  
TO THE EUROPEAN PROVINCES OF TURKEY  
ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

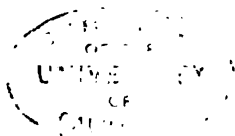
BY ALLEN UPWARD

CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE FARNASSUS PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ATHENS  
FORMERLY RESIDENT OF LOKOJA, NORTHERN NIGERIA, ETC.

WITH A PREFACE

BY THE LATE MAJOR SIR EDWARD FITZGERALD LAW  
K.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., ETC. ETC.

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IN MEMORY  
OF  
SIR NICHOLAS R. O'CONOR  
FOR MANY YEARS AMBASSADOR OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AT CONSTANTINOPLE  
WHO DIED  
ON THE EVE OF THE FULFILMENT OF HIS HOPES  
FOR THE REGENERATION OF TURKEY

139283





## P R E F A C E

AT a moment such as this, when, owing to the action of Austria and Bulgaria, the Near Eastern Question has once more reached a critical stage, thanks are due to any competent writer who may make an honest attempt to throw light on what is taking place in South-Eastern Europe, in what direction soever his personal sympathies may lie. My own views on the Macedonian Question have been expressed in a letter published in *The Times* of January 22, 1907, and elsewhere. They do not at all points coincide with those set forth in the present volume. Mr. Upward's somewhat idyllic view of Yildiz Kiosk, for instance, is one I am, unfortunately, unable to share. His impartiality, too, may be called in question by some, for his sympathies, are avowedly Greek. But absolute impartiality is hardly to be looked for in a matter so replete with controversial issues, so pre-eminently calculated to excite passion and prejudice. In his own words—"A visitor in Rumelia may be Philhellenic or Bulgarophile, but he cannot be both. If he possesses the friendship and confidence of one side he will never gain that of the other." Great then as are the difficulties of the would-be impartial

observer, yet he may be frank, and Mr. Upward is refreshingly frank ; he may be honest, and Mr. Upward is transparently so.

At the outset of the author's journey the late Sir Nicholas O'Connor, then Ambassador in Constantinople, summed up his advice in the words, " Tell the truth and shame the devil." I think that it will be admitted by every fair-minded reader of the following pages that, in his careful investigation, Mr. Upward has done his best to follow bravely the brave advice so given. It is true that the result, as a whole, is a heavy—nay, a terrible—indictment of Bulgarian ways, and of Comitadji deeds ; a revelation, to those not already well acquainted with the facts, of Bulgarian atrocities in a new and opposite sense to that brought into prominence by Mr. Gladstone's eloquence, but yielding to those of 1877 not a jot in sickening horror. However, with the evidence before him, the reader must judge for himself whether or not the case is made out.

In my letter to *The Times* already referred to, I called attention to the infamies recently committed—not, be it noted, in the debatable land, not in Macedonia, where antagonistic elements were actually at war, where attack and reprisal were the order of the day, where one crime led to another, but in Bulgaria itself, where the dominant race met no challenge, where the peace was unbroken. Here the Greek cities handed over by the Treaty of Berlin to Bulgaria were sacked and burnt and the inhabitants cruelly maltreated, and even

slaughtered, in revenge for the check put at last upon the Comitadji proceedings in Macedonia by the Greek bands organised, tardily enough, for that purpose. That these atrocities passed almost unnoticed by Europe speaks eloquently for the prevalence of sentiments, to say the least of it, the reverse of altruistic. It is highly probable that a large majority of the reading public in England have barely heard of them, and that many indeed will be struck with astonishment on learning that "during the eighteen months between July, 1906, and December, 1907, 40,000 Greeks were compelled to quit the soil of Eastern Rumelia, leaving behind them their lands, their houses, and their whole worldly wealth." It was on account of these atrocities that the veteran statesman, M. Natchevitch, then Bulgarian Diplomatic Agent at Constantinople, and formerly a colleague of Stambouloff, resigned his post. His published words were: "In the face of such outrages I was too deeply ashamed to hold up my head among my colleagues of the *corps diplomatique*." Surely no more eloquent testimony could be wished for by even the most zealous champion of the Greeks?

However, putting aside all questions as to right and wrong, I would point out that in this volume the reader will find, as nowhere else, perhaps, the real causes of the Macedonian trouble laid bare. With the designs and ambitions of the Great Powers Mr. Upward indeed concerns himself but little, though these too come partly under review;



but he does good service in making clear the origin and meaning of the local disturbances, the jealousies and hatreds of the immediate antagonists—mainly, that is, of Greek and Bulgarian—and in emphasising the unhappy truth that the aspirations of the two nationalities are hopelessly irreconcilable. In the words of M. Theotokis, Greek Prime Minister, "The Bulgarians are determined to come down to the sea, and the Greeks will never consent to have their way barred to Constantinople"; and Bulgarian aims are no less frankly stated in an open letter addressed to Prince Ferdinand by M. Bizoff, formerly Bulgarian Commercial Agent, as follows: "We can gain nothing more by the Church and the schools. Bulgaria ought to take arms and possess herself by force of Macedonia, which otherwise will be for ever lost to her."

It is a main peculiarity of the situation in Macedonia, offering a specious excuse, not for Bulgarian methods, but for Bulgarian claims, that, setting the Turks aside, a majority of the population is, in speech, Slavonic. The three elements are roughly given as two-fifths Moslem and one-fifth pure Greek, whilst the remaining two-fifths consists of people who, though very frequently bi-lingual, speak a Slave *patois*, but up to ten years ago were all Patriarchists—adherents, that is, of the Greek Orthodox Church, and, if we accept Mr. Upward's convincing evidence, Greek by tradition, sympathy, and aspiration. Of this, the debatable category round which the contest rages, about one-half has

been won over by the terrorism of the Comitadjis to the Exarchate, and ostensibly to Bulgarian sympathy ; but even so the Greek, or, to be more accurate, the Philhellenic element, prevails, and overwhelmingly so in the south, to dominate which and thus secure the control of the littoral is the ultimate aim of the ambitions of both parties.

It will be readily understood that the Greek claim repudiates philological and even genealogical arguments. Let the matter, it is said, be determined by the free choice of the populations concerned ; and the Bulgarians on their side, seeing that such a view was likely in the present day to commend itself generally to European public opinion, set to work to convert the people in question into Exarchists and Bulgarian "sympathisers" by a system of terrorism seldom paralleled, never, probably, surpassed.

I have referred already to Mr. Upward's opinion regarding the Turks, but it is impossible to disregard the mass of evidence he brings forward in their favour. The Moslems, as every one now knows, are very tolerant in matters of faith. That when quite secure in their own power they are tolerant also politically is no less true ; and it cannot be denied that, so long as they were left in undisturbed possession of South-Eastern Europe, the subject population enjoyed a tranquillity, and even prosperity, that compared favourably with the condition of the peasantry and townsmen in any part of Christian Europe. In Mr. Upward's pages the Turks are

contrasted, much to their advantage, with the Bulgarians, and recent events must confirm the opinion that the pictures he draws of Turkish kindness, tolerance, and even culture, are no mere exceptions to the rule.

Mr. Upward's praiseworthy determination to collect evidence as far as possible at first hand, to sift it for himself on the spot, and to accept nothing on hearsay, is patent throughout his book, and lends a high value to his investigations and their results. Deeply interesting, in particular, are the pages in which he records his visits to numerous schools, both Moslem and Christian, for here he brings us in contact with the nationalities themselves, in conditions the least favourable to disguise or fraud. The vital importance of the schools was well understood on both sides. The Bulgarians devoted their strongest efforts to winning them over, with a measure of success considerable indeed, yet falling short—as M. Bizoff naively admits—of what was hoped and desired.

New light is thrown by Mr. Upward on the position and aims of the Albanians, and of the Vlachs, whose allegiance the Rumanians are claiming, apparently with no great success. Abdul Hamid's self-justifying communication to the author—a unique document—will be read with interest even where it fails to carry conviction; and what Mr. Upward has to say on the Turkish revolution is assuredly not without interest at the present moment.

I will only add that readers of this volume, what-

ever their sympathies, will rise from its perusal with greatly increased knowledge of the subject in hand. They will have learnt much that is new—much, at least, that is not to be found in any other published book. They will know what the Macedonian Question really means, the reasons for its existence, the real causes underlying the bitter and shameful warfare waged by Christian races in Moslem territory. Those, of course, whose minds are already made up on one side or the other will not change them. But the majority, whose opinions are unformed, whose intelligence is open to conviction, will, if their hearts are not callous to human suffering, if their natural impulses are allowed to flow unchecked, be drawn, I feel convinced, into greater sympathy—for sympathy is based on understanding, and understanding on knowledge—with the Philhellenic cause in Macedonia and the neighbouring regions.

E. F. G. LAW.

*October 24, 1908.*



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE following pages report an inquiry into the racial and religious troubles of European Turkey, undertaken during the winter of 1907-8.

My own views and wishes on the subject of a better understanding between the various elements in the population, especially between the Turks and Greeks, have been advanced by subsequent events at a rate which did not then seem possible to the oldest and most experienced observers; but the situation is still sufficiently unsettled, and the influence of past prejudices sufficiently strong in many quarters, to justify a hope that this publication may serve a useful purpose.

The late ambassador of this country at Constantinople, when I requested his counsel as to the course which would be most calculated to do good, responded by urging me to "tell the truth and shame the devil!" Such advice is not easy to follow in such a conflict of testimony and opinion, but I have at least endeavoured to follow those simple principles of the English law of evidence which require that facts shall be testified to by eye-witnesses, and that those witnesses shall be subjected to cross-examination.

To the ambassador himself, and to many other

members of our diplomatic and consular services, I have been greatly indebted for information and assistance. I have had the honour of receiving a communication, probably unique in character, from his Imperial Majesty the Sultan, in the nature of a defence of his government; and I have had the privilege of personal intercourse, of a more or less confidential nature, with many distinguished Turks, among whom may be mentioned Ferid Pasha, the then Grand Vizier, Hakky Bey, who is Minister of the Interior in the new government, and Ahmed Riza Bey, so long the leader of the Young Turks in Paris; besides Hilmi Pasha, the viceroy of the Macedonian vilayets, and not a few governors-general and governors in the disturbed provinces. On the side of the Greeks I have had the honour of meeting his Holiness the Œcumenical Patriarch, Mr. Theotokis, the Prime Minister of Greece, the late and present Foreign Ministers, and many archbishops of dioceses in Turkey. The Bulgarian Archbishop of Monastir, and Bulgarian and Servian agents and consuls there and elsewhere, also favoured me with their views.

But the feature of the work to which I attach most importance is the evidence obtained from more humble sources, some of them overlooked by previous inquirers. Upwards of thirty schools, representative of seven or eight nationalities, have been personally visited and inspected to obtain information on the relative strength of the different races and creeds, and their educational progress. The inhabitants of almost as many towns and villages have been questioned under circumstances that afforded some chance of eliciting their real experiences and sentiments. The leaders of Greek bands

have given accounts of their doings with considerable candour; and a report is included, written by a French gendarmery officer to his superior, which contains a remarkably vivid and circumstantial description of an operation by Turkish troops against the Comitadjis.

If the perusal of this evidence has the effect designed, it should serve rather to open than to close the reader's mind, and, by bringing him into closer touch with the realities of the situation, place him in a better position to understand and judge the progress of the great changes now taking place in this least-known corner of Europe.

A. U.

*October 29, 1908.*





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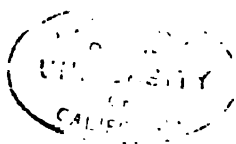
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# THE EAST END OF EUROPE

## HISTORICAL OUTLINE

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IN the present day education is in so disorganised a state, and includes such a variety of subjects, that it is no longer possible for a writer to form a reasonable estimate of the extent to which his readers are already informed on the topic which he proposes to treat. Generally speaking, the English public is very fully acquainted with the history of the quarrels between the small Greek states in the period between 500 and 300 B.C., its impressions of the Alexandrian world are faint and uncertain, and its familiarity with the more recent history of the near East breaks off where Gibbon breaks off, at the fall of Constantinople, and revives with the Gladstonian crusade against the Turks.

This fragmentary knowledge is the source of a good deal of prejudice and mistaken policy, and in the absence of any complete and satisfactory history of the entire region, for the entire period from 500 B.C.



to A.D. 1908, the following outline may assist a certain number of readers to take a more clear and connected view of the present situation in Turkey and the problems it presents to statesmanship. It is unfortunately the case that much of the recent history and geography of the Balkan peninsula has been written by partisans or patriots, in a political rather than a scientific spirit, justifying the remark of the German ethnologist who declared that he could always foretell the conclusions of any ethnographical work on Macedonia as soon as he knew the nationality of the author. This evil has largely sprung from the mischievous view that the nationality of the Balkan populations ought to be determined on genealogical or philological grounds, instead of by the free choice of those concerned.

### 1. *The Greeks*

The Greek people are known to themselves as Hellenes, a name which there are some grounds for interpreting as children, or worshippers, of the sun. When the history of Europe first began to be written, five hundred years before the Christian era, they were already established in their present seats. What is now the territory of the Greek kingdom was recognised as the homeland of the race, from which colonies went forth planting cities and seaports all round the coast of the Ægean, the Black, and the Mediterranean seas, and everywhere diffusing the light of Hellenic culture. The various states of which this Hellenic world was composed were united by the possession of a common language, which has remained in use to the present day, with the natural modifications due to time and events, by common arts and sciences, and by the sense of a common nationality in which races of various origins were blended as they are in the English nation.

At that epoch the Greeks clearly felt themselves to

be distinguished from the peoples who surrounded them by certain ideals which still inspire them, and which they have gradually communicated to the rest of mankind : the love of freedom, the thirst for knowledge, and that spirit which we express by the word humanity. The Hellenic mind reached its highest expression in the city of Athens, for ages the Holy City of culture ; and perhaps the principles of civil government have never been more nobly stated than in the funeral oration pronounced by Pericles over the Athenians who had fallen in the Peloponnesian War :

“ We bring freedom into the conduct of our public affairs, and also into our daily dealings with one another. We are not angry with our neighbours because they do that which gives them pleasure. We do not engage in persecutions which, though they may not be the punishments of the law, are not less painful. Without malice in our private relations, in our public proceedings we are law-abiding out of respect for right ; rendering obedience to such as exercise authority, and to the laws ; above all to those which favour the injured, and to those unwritten ones which bring the injurer under a universal ban.”

It cannot be pretended that the political life of the ancient Greeks, even in Athens, actually realised the ideal of her greatest statesman. But it was much that he should have been able to place it before his fellow-citizens for their admiration. There is no existing state, with the possible exception of China, to which the words of Pericles could be applied except in a spirit of satire. Modern Europe, including modern Greece herself, is still far from grasping the principle embodied in the words : “ We are not angry with our neighbours because they do that which gives them pleasure.”

## 2. *The Macedonians*

Hellas, like Jewry, was and is not so much a country as a people. The idea of nationality in the East hardly

includes that territorial element which Western Europe owes to the feudal system. It is rather racial and religious than geographical, and on that account it has tended in the past to be rather exclusive than inclusive in its manifestation.

Our own day has witnessed the spectacle of the Greeks claiming the population of Macedonia as Hellenes, and taking up arms to resist their Bulgarisation by force. In the classical age of Greece the claim of the Macedonians to enter the sacred circle of Hellas was received with some jealousy; and the kings of that country were required to prove their Greek descent before they were admitted to the privilege of competing in the Olympic Games.

Such is the first ray of light thrown by history on that region which has since become the prize of contest between Moslem and Christian, Servian, Bulgarian, and Greek. And it reveals the population as doubtfully Greek in origin, but enlightened by Greek culture, and inspired by the ambition of becoming Greek in name. Almost exactly similar conditions will be found prevailing in the same region at the present hour.

In the next generation king Philip of Macedon established a species of suzerainty or protectorate over most of the Greek states, and his son, Alexander the Great, led them to the conquest of Asia. In the vast realm which he annexed to Hellas the distinction between Greek and Macedonian was swiftly effaced, and the name of Macedon remained in use merely as the name of the least of those kingdoms into which the Alexandrian empire was split up.

### 3. *The Romans*

The age that followed was that in which the Greeks established that empire over the human mind which has given them their supreme place in the history of civilisation. Between 300 and 100 B.C. the countries

bordering on the Mediterranean in its eastern extent received the firm stamp of Hellenic culture, and the Greek scholars of Alexandria gave a permanent shape to those studies which have formed the basis of European education ever since.

When the Romans came upon the scene they paid the same homage to Greek superiority that the Macedonians had paid before them. They, in their turn, sought to connect their origin with the heroic age of Hellas. They took over the Greek culture like a ready-made suit of clothes, and the Latin Grammar is in reality no less a production of the Greek mind than Euclid's Elements.

It was again reserved for the Greeks, in the following centuries, to welcome the religious revelation rejected by the Jews, to write its literature, shape its dogmas, organise its churches, and launch it on the Western world. The traveller who meets with the word pope, or papa, the Greek name for father, as the title of every village priest in the Levant, is irresistibly reminded of the Greek origin of that great bishopric which once extended its authority over the whole of Latin Christendom.

The great code of laws which is Rome's solitary bequest to civilisation is deeply tinctured by the spirit of Greek philosophy, and the ideal of Pericles shines forth once more in the maxim with which it opens: "So use thy own as not to hurt another."

#### 4. *The Byzantine Empire*

The Roman passed, as the Macedonian had passed, from the stage of history, with the loss of his military power. But again the Greeks outlasted their conquerors, and ages after the Latin provinces of the empire had passed into barbarian hands the Greek provinces continued to emerge from the waves, and to remain an island of light in the midst of a sea of war and desolation.

Nevertheless, the Greece whose capital was Constantinople exhibited a very marked decadence from the Greece whose capital was Athens, and this decadence cannot be attributed wholly to the barbarian assaults. The celebrated observation that Islam was the executioner of Hellenism cannot be supported. Hellenism perished in giving birth to Christianity. The schools of Athens were closed by Justinian one hundred years before Mohammed began to preach, and they have never been reopened. The Greek clergy, no less than the Latin, exerted themselves to efface the science and literature of Paganism, and to confine the human intellect in the strait bonds of orthodoxy. It was Islam which gathered up the dying embers, and fanned them into a flame which illumined the West in the Middle Ages, till it was extinguished in the blood of the Albigeois by the Papal crusaders.

It would be entirely unjust to consider Christianity as the sole cause of a revolution of which it was rather the symptom, and, in a great measure, the palliative. The principal cause of this great difference between the Byzantine Greeks and those of the classical age was the confounding of classes and races which took place under the Roman empire, which at once paved the way for Christianity, and was promoted by it. An ancient observer has left us a picture of the market-place of Sparta, in which he saw a mere handful of Spartan citizens passing proudly through the throng of strangers and slaves and helots, which divided before them like the waves before the prow of a ship. It is those nameless masses, those peasant serfs of unknown origin who cultivated the fields for their Doric masters, whom the edict of Caracalla and the communion-table of the Church have confounded with their ancient lords in the Greek nationality as it exists to-day.

But while their inferiority in intellect and humanity is unquestioned, the Byzantine Greeks have not received sufficient credit for the warlike qualities which

enabled them to hold out a thousand years after Rome had fallen against an endless succession of the fiercest foes by which any civilised state has ever been assailed. The long list of invasions which swept over the Balkan peninsula begins with the Goths and ends with the Turks, but in between came the countless hordes of the Lombards and Avars, the Slaves and Bulgars, the Saracens and Normans. It is not often enough remembered that the so-called crusade which delivered Constantinople into the hands of a bandit swarm of Venetians and Frankish chiefs, in the twelfth century, did more than anything else to weaken the structure of the Byzantine empire, and lay it open to the Mohammedan power.

### 5. *The Slaves*

Out of all the races which successively poured down on to the Macedonian plains, the only one which has established itself in sufficient numbers to affect the general character of the population is the Slave. Their name has been connected by philologists with a word meaning praise, or more probably, in its earliest form, song. As it is common for primitive peoples to brand foreign races by a name signifying that their speech is harsh or unintelligible, so it may be a reasonable conjecture that the name Slave was originally adopted in an opposite sense, as distinguishing the people whose speech was harmonious, or else that it was bestowed on them by their neighbours in consequence of the peculiar pitch of their voices. National vanity has chosen to translate the name by the word "glorious," but it has passed into the Dutch group of languages with a much less honourable signification, apparently as the result of wars in which the Slave population of north-western Europe became the bondsmen of their Teutonic conquerors.

The purest representatives of this race in the Balkan region are probably to be found in the modern states

of Serbia and Montenegro, but the Slave element is also the most conspicuous one in Bulgaria, in Bosnia, in the Turkish vilayet of Kossovo, and over an undefined area to the south. Indeed, to fix the limits within which it is fairly entitled to recognition as the predominant one in the population, and to discriminate within the Slavonic fold between the rival claims of the Servian and Bulgarian nationalities, is the most pressing of the tasks at present before the statesmen of Turkey and of Europe; as it is their failure to grapple with it which has filled Macedonia with bloodshed and anarchy for many years past.

The unfortunate action of Western sympathisers in concentrating their interest of late years on the Bulgars, to the exclusion of the other Christian races of Turkey, to say nothing of the Turks themselves, has so far distorted public opinion on the whole question of the near East, that it has become imperative to redress the balance, even at the cost of some severity in speaking of a people who have many good qualities, and are as fully entitled as any other to sympathy and support in asserting their legitimate claims by tolerable means.

### 6. *The Bulgars*

The name of the Bulgars, written in Greek *Voulgaroi*, first meets us in the history of the sixth century, when some tribes thus called broke across the Danube as part of a mixed horde of Turks, Avars, and Slaves.

Their modern historians derive the name from the river Volga, from whose banks they appear to have migrated. But such a derivation leaves us in ignorance of the meaning of the name Volga, which, like that of the Niger, may have been taken from the nations through which it flowed. It seems simpler to regard the word Bulgar as another form of the Latin *Vulgus* and the English *Folk*, and to suppose

that it was bestowed on a race of peasants by their conquerors. The existing nation is characterised by many traits which make the name in that sense peculiarly suitable; indeed Professor Dicey, in writing of the Bulgarian Principality as the "Peasant State," seems to have been influenced by the very idea which perhaps underlies the name Bulgar.<sup>1</sup>

The modern Bulgars are generally credited with a strain of Tartar or Turanian blood. In that connection it is significant that their first attack on the Byzantine empire was made in company with Turks and Avars; and it is unhappily the case that their temper in warfare has in all ages betrayed a ferocity which Europe has been taught to associate with the Turks. But the national dialect is almost wholly Slave, and the general character and political sympathies of the Bulgars suggest that they are a Slave people which has absorbed a smaller Asiatic element as the English absorbed the Normans.

For some centuries the name of the Bulgars disappears from the page of history. But in the ninth century the Greek empire was being assailed at the same time by the Saracens from the south and east, and by the pagan Slaves from the north and west; and among these latter enemies the Bulgars emerged for a time as the leaders of the attack.

In that age, as in the present day, we find their campaigns marked by acts of savagery peculiarly characteristic of servile or peasant warfare, as in the Servile Wars of the ancient world, the Jacqueries of medieval France, and the anarchist propaganda in modern Europe. Treaties of peace proved useless to restrain these treacherous barbarians, who broke them as soon as the danger was past. Their khan,

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the name of the Bulgar nation ought to be relieved from Gibbon's imputation of being the origin of a more odious word found in the medieval statutes against heresy. That word is connected with a large European group meaning a god, or spirit—it includes Shakespeare's Puck—and with religious ideas of which some trace is found in the Old Testament.



Kroumos, or Kremm, overthrew the emperor Nikephoros in battle, slew him, and made a drinking-cup out of his skull.

In the next generation the Greeks resorted to the measure so often employed by the Roman Church against the Western barbarians, and two Greek monks succeeded in persuading the Folk to call themselves Christians.

The respite thus gained was a brief one. In the tenth century the Bulgars, under their tsar Simeon, became masters of the Balkan peninsula from sea to sea; and pursuing a policy which has sometimes attracted them in later times, they transferred their allegiance from the See of Constantinople to that of Rome, receiving from the Pope the title of Patriarch for the head of the Bulgarian Church.

The power of the Bulgars was finally broken about the year 1018 by the Greek Emperor, Basil II., surnamed the Folkslayer (*Voulgaroktonos*). They sank into the condition of vassals of the Byzantine empire, sometimes in rebellion, and renewing their relations with the Roman See, but at other times aiding their suzerains against the Latin crusaders. They passed under the yoke of the short-lived Servian empire of Stephen Dushan (A.D. 1346), and shortly afterwards vanished from the light of history for five hundred years under the shadow of the Crescent.

In the following century, with the fall of Constantinople (A.D. 1453), Hellenism underwent a similar eclipse for three hundred and fifty years.

In weighing the respective claims and merits of the Greeks and Bulgars of to-day, it ought to be borne in mind that when the curtain of Islam descended on the scene the Greeks were still the leading nation of the Balkans, the only one entitled to be called civilised, and the one which had borne the brunt of the Moslem onset for seven centuries, and yet had been the last to succumb. The Bulgars had received their religion, and such civilisation as

they possessed, from the Greeks; sheltered behind the screen of Constantinople from the Turks, they had, so to speak, co-operated with them in sapping its foundations; and the moment they found themselves face to face with the Ottoman hosts they submitted without a single battle which history has thought worth recording.

### *7. The Turks*

The Turks are the only people in Eastern Europe who entered it by way of Asia. This circumstance caused them to come in contact with the religion and culture of Islam before that of Christendom, and their consequent adoption of the Koran as their rule of faith imposed a barrier between them and the races which they subjugated which has proved insurmountable up to the present hour.

Their march across Europe was arrested at the gates of Vienna. It is impossible to assign any regular boundaries to an empire which has constantly fluctuated in its geographical extent, and in the nature of its hold on the subject provinces. But at the close of the eighteenth century, when the Balkan question was entering on its present phase, the line of the Danube and Save formed the northern limit of Turkish occupation, Bosnia being the furthest province to contain any large Moslem population; while the modern kingdom of Rumania was represented by two tributary states under Greek hospodars appointed by the Porte.

Within this area the conquered peoples, Greek, Bulgar, and Serb, underwent the fate of the Anglo-Saxons after the Norman conquest. After a short period of conciliation for prudential motives, they found themselves despoiled of their lands, and treated as an inferior race. But there is no evidence that religious feeling influenced the Turks in their treatment of their Christian subjects. They showed no

design to convert them; on the contrary, they have been charged with desiring them to remain outside the pale of Islam in order that they might be more freely oppressed.

The solitary occasion on which the Turks were tempted to quit the path of toleration was when the Christian sovereigns of Spain were erasing Moham-medanism and Judaism together, in their dominions, with a deliberate cruelty which the Turks have certainly never exceeded. The Sultan formed a rash resolution of avenging the sufferings of his fellow-believers on the Christians who were in his power; but, his intention becoming known, he was stopped on the threshold of the mosque of St. Sophia by the Sheikh-ul-Islam, who read out from the Koran a text forbidding persecution, and extorted from the Sultan a promise to abandon his purpose.

In more recent times, the action of the Christian Powers in using the cloak of religion to cover their designs on the Turkish empire has sometimes tempted the Sultans to adopt forcible methods of conversion in order to increase the number of their loyal subjects. But such departures from their traditional policy have been rare and sporadic. On the whole, the history of Turkey is probably more free from the stain of persecution than that of any other state in Europe; and during the centuries in which the Christians of the West were dooming each other to exile, imprisonment, torture, and death for the most trifling differences of creed, the Christians of the East enjoyed the exercise of their religion as freely as they do to-day.

On the other hand, it is true that the Christians have had it in their power at any time to pass over to the ranks of the dominant caste by embracing Islam. In this respect their position may be compared with that of the Irish Catholics under the penal laws of the eighteenth century. Yet that very comparison should remind an English critic of the Turks that he is, after all, only condemning them for having lagged a genera-

tion or two behind himself. They can hardly be said to have lagged behind Russia or Spain.

By the Turks themselves, and by the Christians of Turkey, the name Turk is constantly used to include all the Mohammedan elements in the population, including those of European origin; but, in view of the distinct character of the Albanian people, it is better to employ the term Moslem as the antithesis to Christian.

### 8. *The Patriarchate*

If there were any truth in the saying that the nation is happy which has no history, the period of the enforced truce between the Christian races of the Balkans, under their Moslem lords, ought to be esteemed their golden age. I have before me a chronological abstract of the history of "Macedonia" from the year 850 B.C. to A.D. 1896, compiled by a Greek scholar, Dr. Nicolaides. Between A.D. 1570 and 1745 there is not a single entry.

Of all the charges so recklessly hurled against the Turks perhaps the most groundless is that of their having acted on the principle *Divide et impera*. So far from dividing their Christian subjects, it was their policy to unite them in one fold under the Œcumenical Patriarch, and to include them all in one nationality, the Greek. The Slave Patriarchates were suppressed after a life of centuries, and the See of Constantinople obtained an extent of territorial influence and authority which it had never enjoyed in the Byzantine ages. The Patriarch of Constantinople was formally entrusted by the Turkish conqueror with the care of the Christian population, and to this day he enjoys and exercises the right of representing them at the Sublime Porte, of presenting their petitions, and claiming the redress of their grievances: a position which may be best understood by imagining the Hindus represented at the Court of St. James's by a supreme Brahman having direct access to the Throne and to

the Prime Minister behind the backs of the Viceroy and Secretary for India.

The Christian population, organised under the Patriarchate, formed a state within a state, administering their own affairs, holding courts, and governed by their own laws in such matters as marriage and inheritance. Their bishops, most of whom assumed the rank of metropolitans, received a staff as the badge of their authority, and were treated as great officers of state, on a level with the Turkish governors. It is not to be denied that the Greek clergy abused the power with which they found themselves invested, though whether they did so to a greater extent than other priesthoods is at least doubtful. Simony has not been confined to the Greek Church, nor is its clergy the only one that has been accused of amassing exorbitant wealth. In conducting worship in the Greek tongue amid a Slave-speaking population they did no more than the English Church in Wales, and the Roman Church in England.

Through the long *Pax Turcomanica*, however, the seeds of national life and international strife continued to germinate in silence. There is apparent a great difference in the attitude of the various races towards the Turkish rule. The Greeks, although favoured and entrusted with important posts by their conquerors, never for a moment abandoned the hope of regaining all they had lost. They lived a life of perpetual conspiracy, intriguing with the Western Powers and with Russia, and always preparing for the future revolt. The Serbs kept up the memory of their past glories in heroic songs and ballads, and the rocks of Montenegro became a citadel of bandit freedom. The Bulgars alone made no sign. They settled down into a state of apathetic subjection, varied only by occasional acts of brigandage and private vengeance. Content to cultivate their fields in peace, they were, and they remain, the one people in the Balkans which has never struck a serious blow for its own deliverance.

*9. The European Powers*

The present attitude of the European Powers towards Turkey and her Christian subjects may be dated from the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when the Turkish military power had been fatally weakened by the wars of Catherine the Great.

Shortly after the successful partition of Poland, the Emperor Joseph II. of Austria proposed to Russia a joint attack upon the Turkish empire for the purpose of "delivering mankind from these barbarians." The Austrian forces had occupied the then province of Servia, when the jealousy of Prussia, supported by France and England, compelled them to withdraw, though not before planting the seeds of that long struggle which ended in the establishment of Servian independence.

From that time forth the dissolution of the Turkish empire has been alternately arrested and precipitated by the action of the European Powers, whose mutual jealousies have not suffered them to co-operate sincerely in any definite settlement. The general result of their action has been to withdraw from the authority of the Sultan those provinces where Christians preponderated, but the part which each Power has played in the evolution has generally depended on its view of its own interest at the moment. Thus it was remarked by the German historian Ranke, writing before the Crimean War, that the absolutist governments of Russia and Austria were generally found on the side of emancipation, while the Liberal Powers, England and France, as steadily supported the cause of Turkish authority.

In considering the policy of Russia, the Power best entitled to be called the liberator of the Balkans, it is fair to remember that she has been in the fortunate position of finding no conflict between her selfish interests and her sympathies. Her statesmen may be actuated by the ambition of reaching the Mediter-

ranee, but her people are inspired by a genuine enthusiasm for the members of their own Church and their own race. The policy of England, on the other hand, has been rendered contradictory and puzzling to foreign observers, by the opposition between her interest in the integrity of the Ottoman power and her love of free institutions, a love strengthened in this case by the belief that such institutions would be the surest means of restoring vigour to the decaying empire. These opposing views are represented by political parties, each of which is sincere; but that party which advocates a foreign policy based upon considerations of sentiment is apt, at the critical moment, to lack the courage of its opinions and to leave the direction of affairs in the hands of its opponents. Such is the explanation of that charge of hypocrisy so constantly brought against British statesmanship by those whose hopes have been disappointed by its action.

The net result of these divergent views and interests has been that, whereas it is Russia and Austria which have done the most to liberate the Christians of Turkey, France and England have been chiefly instrumental in preserving the emancipated provinces from losing their independence afresh by annexation to those empires. It remains to see what influence the Powers have exercised on the more complicated disputes between the Christians themselves.

The genesis of those disputes may be traced side by side with the progress of emancipation.

#### 10. *Genesis of the Folk War*

The first faint stirring of the wind was felt in the middle of the eighteenth century, when a Macedonian Greek, remarkably enough named Voulgaris, laid the foundation of that noble system of schools which to-day overspreads all European Turkey.

Almost at the same time, and on the very spot

chosen by Voulgaris for one of his schools, a Bulgarian priest named Paisy, in a monastery of Mount Athos, was setting himself to write a history of the "Peoples, Tsars, and Saints of Bulgaria," moved thereto, as he tells us in his quaint epilogue, by grief at the scorn of the Greeks and Serbs, who taunted the Bulgars with having no history.

Paisy's work seems to have made little impression on his own people, but it met with a very different reception further north. Up to this time the Russians had shared the general ignorance or indifference as to the racial distinctions among the Christians of Turkey. They had encouraged the intrigues of the Greeks, and looked upon them as their future allies in the work of breaking up the Ottoman empire. But they were now quick to perceive the superior merits, from their point of view, of the Bulgars. The Greeks, vain of their past greatness, and intractable to every form of foreign government, would never willingly place Constantinople in Russian hands. The Folk, on the contrary, presented themselves as an abject-spirited mass of serfs who would thankfully exchange their Moslem lords for Orthodox Christians.

From this moment the gospel of Panslavism was steadily preached in the Balkans, and every effort was made to awaken the Bulgars to a consciousness of their distinct nationality, and to teach them that the Greeks were no less their enemies than the Turks themselves—lessons which have borne terrible fruits in the last ten years.

### 11. *The Wars of Independence*

The Greeks had been the last of the Christian peoples to pass under the Turkish yoke, and they were the first to escape from it. But they had no desire to escape alone. When in the early years of the nineteenth century they raised the banner of



freedom, they believed themselves to be giving the signal for a universal deliverance of the Christians, and the first blow for freedom was actually struck in what is now the kingdom of Rumania.

The result showed that they had wrongly gauged the feelings of their brethren, who had no desire to see a restored Byzantine empire, with the Greeks in the position of the ruling caste. All the ancient jealousies that had slumbered under the Moslem domination instantly woke to life. Rumanians joined hands with Turks to crush the insurrection, the Bulgars remained stolidly indifferent, and the Servians, in their remote province, conducted their own struggle, alternately submitting to the Turkish governors, and revolting again, without any direct reference to what was being done elsewhere by the Greeks. The only allies who were found to share with the Greeks in the sufferings and glories of the War of Independence were among the Orthodox Albanians and the Vlachs of Macedonia, the latter a race which no subsequent intrigues have ever succeeded in detaching from the fold of Hellenism. In consequence of this want of union among the Christians, the Greeks only succeeded in freeing a small territory, to which some additions have been made since by the action of the Powers, but which has never corresponded to the real strength of the Hellenic element in the population of the empire. A large part of Macedonia, including the whole seaboard of the *Ægean*, and a great number of islands, of which Crete and Cyprus are the most important, form the territory of unredeemed Hellas. From the point of view of numbers and geographical situation, their claim on Constantinople is stronger than that of any other Christian people, while on historical and sentimental grounds no other Christian nation has any claim whatever.

Such as they were, the scanty results obtained by the War of Independence were very largely owing

to the good offices of Russia, the only Power which has ever showed any heartiness on behalf of any of the Balkan Christians. France and England came in, as it were, at the last moment, but their influence was exerted rather in the direction of cutting down than enlarging the area of freedom, the British Government, in particular, showing itself persistently bent on confining the Greek state within the narrowest possible limits, out of regard for the integrity of Turkey.

The independence of Servia and Rumania was achieved by degrees, with the same support from Russia, and the same sullen opposition from the Western Powers.

But the Bulgars continued quiescent, and not all the efforts of the Panslavist agents succeeded in inspiring them with the ambition of freedom, or the courage to fight for it. Even the presence of a Russian army of liberation in their midst failed to rouse them. An English officer who followed the Russian campaign of 1828 reported that only a single village had been moved to take arms on the arrival of their would-be liberators.

"Elsewhere," says Captain Chesney, "there has been no disposition amongst the Bulgarians to join the Russians, nor would they do so in case of a future war. . . . Whatever contests may arise, the Bulgarian will most likely remain passively cultivating the soil, attending his flocks and herds, and enjoying that rough portion of plenty which his cottage (sunk in the ground) always affords."<sup>1</sup>

The contrast is great between this supine race of serfs, almost refusing to be freed themselves, and the same race overrunning Macedonia with fire and sword on the pretext of freeing its brethren.

<sup>1</sup> *Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda of the Duke of Wellington*, vol. vi. p. 483. See *Seven Essays on Christian Greece*, by D. Bikelas, p. 285 (Marquess of Bute's translation).

12. *The Exarchate*

Russia had failed to induce the Folk to face the Moslem arms; it proved an easier matter to persuade them to brave the spiritual weapons of the Greek Church.

The bait held out was not freedom of conscience, but the more tempting one of freedom of pocket. The peasant soul was stirred to its depths by the artful recapitulation of the clerical dues on "money, barley, wheat, rye, maize, oats, onions, garlic, radishes, cabbages, pepper, beans, haricots, peas, lentils, and fruits of every kind."<sup>1</sup> The name of each vegetable would be a separate pang.

The Crimean War was hardly over when the Bulgars were prevailed on to demand separation from the Greek Patriarchate under an "Exarch" of their own. The Porte should have welcomed this division in the Christian ranks, but the hand of Russia was too plainly visible in the intrigue, and the opposition of the Western Powers delayed its success till 1870.

In the meantime Napoleon III. had tried to bid against Russia with a project for reuniting the Bulgars with their old patron the Pope. Their religion sits more lightly on the Folk than on most Christian peoples, and the project was not altogether hopeless. French priests were despatched to the ground, a respectable number of converts were made by means as respectable as missionaries usually employ, and in June 1861 a Bulgarian bishop who had been consecrated by the Pope landed at Salonika. A week later he mysteriously vanished from the knowledge of mankind; and perhaps it requires no great acumen to fix the responsibility for this dramatic specimen of Slave diplomacy.

The Church of Rome took the hint, nothing more was heard of the "Uniate" movement; and in 1870

<sup>1</sup> See a characteristic extract from a Panslavist tract in M. Bérard's *La Turquie*, etc., p. 182.

the Porte was allowed to seal the firman constituting the Exarchate. According to Balkan ideas this step amounted to the formal recognition of a Bulgarian nationality, distinct from the Greek. In this way the work of Basil the Folkslayer was undone after eight hundred years, and the Greeks were deprived by intrigue of what their ancestors had gained in war.

The idea of two Christian churches subsisting side by side in peaceful rivalry, like that of the Protestant sects in countries like England and America, was not present to the minds of those who passed this measure. The limits assigned to the Exarchate were geographical, corresponding in the main to those of the present Bulgarian state. Within these boundaries the character of the Christian population was fairly homogeneous; but there was a wide area outside, including a greater part of the Macedonian region, in which it was more mixed or more uncertain. To meet that state of things the firman contained a provision which sowed the seed of the Folk War.

"Elsewhere than in the districts enumerated above, if the whole or at least two-thirds of the inhabitants desire the authority of the Exarch, and if their demands have been legally examined and established, they shall be allowed to pass over to the Exarchate, always with the good-will and consent of the whole or at least two-thirds of the population. If any one takes this excuse to sow discord and trouble among the inhabitants, those guilty of such proceedings shall be punished according to law."

The commentary on that text stands written in the blood of the Macedonian Greeks to-day.

The Patriarch of Constantinople replied to the firman by an excommunication on the part of the whole Eastern Church, an act by which perhaps he showed himself a better Hellene than a churchman. The excommunication did not fall in vain. It was too late to save the ground already assigned to the

Exarchate, but outside that area the progress of Bulgarism was arrested for twenty years. Required to choose between their creed and their linguistic affinities, the Macedonian Folk showed themselves better churchmen than Bulgars.

### 13. *The Bulgarian Principality*

Russia had delivered her clients from Basil the Folkslayer ; seven years later she undertook to deliver them from Bajazet the Lightning.

The Bosnians and Herzegovinians had long been in arms, and independent Servia had gone to their assistance, when the Folk were at last aroused to strike their first and only blow on their own behalf. Their insurrectionary movement was neither formidable nor prolonged, but it was marked by the same cruelty which has disgraced their more recent warfare, and the Turks retaliated in kind. The ferocity of the revolt went unnoticed; that of the repression was remarked by Gladstone, with results which are familiar to the world. It was the phrase "Bulgarian Atrocities" which first revealed to the general public the existence of this obscure and forgotten people, whose own deeds have now lent to that phrase a new and more sinister significance.

Encouraged by the great English statesman, the Russian armies took the field once more, and their victories liberated at last the one people in the Balkans which had proved unwilling or unable to liberate itself.

By the treaty which closed the war Panslavism overleaped the boundaries of the Exarchate and bestowed upon the Folk nearly all Macedonia down to the Ægean Sea. In this way a large Hellenic population saw themselves placed by the power of Russia under the domination of a race which they had repeatedly subdued in former ages, and whose recent history showed it to be much inferior in courage and in civili-

sation to their own. They instantly took arms to resist the execution of the treaty.

The other European Powers were shocked, not at the injury to the Greeks, but at the advantage to Russia, and at Berlin they cut down the Big Bulgaria of the San Stefano treaty to limits more favourable to the maintenance of the Turkish power. The reduced Bulgaria was further divided into the Principality of Bulgaria and an autonomous province of Eastern Rumelia, but in 1885 the Principality annexed this province in a single night, and without having to fire a single shot.

The ease with which this union was carried out was its best justification, and public opinion would have been shocked by any forcible interference with a revolution which so evidently fulfilled the wishes of the inhabitants. Nevertheless, the precedent was a dangerous one. There had been danger in thrusting liberty upon a nation which had given no proof, by heroic deeds, of deserving or strongly desiring it. And when the scarcely weaned state showed that it possessed an appetite for expansion already full-grown, it was still more dangerous to teach it that it might gratify that appetite without facing those toils and dangers which act as a restraint on the ambition of stronger Powers.

#### 14. *Macedonia*

Eastern Rumelia was only a part of that Big Bulgaria created by Russia but retrenched by the Berlin Congress, and already the politicians of Sofia were casting covetous eyes on the territory which lay between them and the Mediterranean. But here the conditions were very different.

The remnant of the Turkish empire in Europe, officially styled Rumelia, is divided by the Pindus mountains into two regions. That to the west forms two vilayets covering the area of Albania and Epirus, and is outside the sphere of Bulgarian ambition for

the present. The region extending eastward to the Straits is divided into four vilayets, the easternmost of which is known officially as Adrianople, and to scholars and Hellenes as Thrace.

It is to the intervening area comprised in the vilayets of Salonika, Monastir, and Kossovo that the name of Macedonia has been inaccurately applied. There being no substantial difference in character between the populations of the four vilayets, and all alike being the objects of Bulgarian ambition, and the theatre of revolutionary enterprise, it is more useful to consider them together under the official designation of Rumelia.

The total population of the four provinces, including Constantinople, may amount to rather over four millions, of whom probably two-fifths are Moslems. Another fifth at the least is made up of Hellenes, who are so by blood, language, religion, and national sentiment, and of a race known as Vlachs, or Koutzo-Vlachs, who speak a dialect half Greek and half Latin in character, but who are in sentiment more Hellenist than the Hellenes themselves. The remaining two-fifths speak a Slave patois, which appears to resemble the Bulgarian more closely than the Servian, except on the Servian frontier, and until the recent strife arose they were generally content to be known as Bulgars, although, curiously enough, when they call themselves Bulgars they do so in Serb.<sup>1</sup> But for the most part their idea of nationality has been rather religious than racial; they have adhered to the Greek Patriarchate, the Greek language has been used in their schools, and they have been officially classified as Greeks by the Ottoman authorities. Their position has borne some resemblance to that of the Highlanders of Scotland, who are distinguished from the Lowland Scots as Gaels, while distinguished from the English as Scots.

<sup>1</sup> *Ja sam Bougarim* ("I am Bulgarian"). The Bulgar proper calls himself *Bolgarim*.

It is this indifferent or doubtful element which has become the prize of contention in the Folk War of the last few years, which has so far resulted in bringing over about one half to the Bulgarian Exarchate. The remainder have been confirmed in their adherence to the Patriarchate, and imbued with a distinct sentiment of Hellenic nationality. A new impulse has been given to the spread of the Greek language, and the name Bulgar is being repudiated in favour of "Macedonian."

In order to pave the way to the annexation of Rumelia, the task before the Bulgarian imperialists was twofold. In the first place they had to detach the Slave-speaking inhabitants from the Patriarchate, and attach them to the Exarchate. But that in itself would not have been enough, because of the local distribution of the different races. The Hellenes, as we should expect, occupy the whole of the sea-coast in a nearly solid mass, which shades off in approaching the centre and north. The Slave element is equally solid in the north, and fades away to almost nothing on approaching the sea. The danger which the statesmen of Sofia had to fear was an equitable partition of the country on these lines between the two nationalities, which would leave Bulgaria bigger indeed, but without the coveted coastline of the *Ægean*, and without that reversion to Constantinople which is the prime goal of Balkan ambitions.

Such a partition presented itself to the mind of the celebrated Greek statesmen, Tricoupis, who privately visited Sofia in 1891 to propose it to Stambouloff. The Bulgarian Minister listened to what he had to say, rejected the Greek pretensions as excessive, and then betrayed the secret of the negotiation to the Porte.

In order to justify the annexation of the entire territory between Bulgaria and the sea, therefore, it became necessary to create a fictitious country with a fictitious nationality. To return to the former



illustration, we must imagine an independent Irish Republic desirous of adding the whole of Scotland to its dominions. It would be obliged, in the first place, to teach the Gaelic population that they were Irishmen, in order to enlist their support, and then to preach that Scotland was an indivisible whole in order to establish a claim over the Lowlands.

The Bulgarian propagandists found what they required in the word "Macedonia," a name with no more definite signification than Wessex or Languedoc. Unfortunately for themselves, the Greeks had been the first to make use of this name, with its classical associations, and to give it a wide extension to the north in the interests of Hellenic expansion. As usual, their exaggerated pretensions defeated themselves, and the Bulgars now hoist them with their own petard, by persuading Europe that Macedonia was a definite political entity, like Wales or Switzerland.

As a matter of convenience, the recent usage of European publicists makes the boundaries of "Macedonia" coincide with those of the three vilayets indicated in the scheme of Macedonian reforms, Kossovo, Monastir, and Salonika. But such a definition suits neither the Greeks nor the Bulgars. The official map prepared by the Greek Government to show the schools of Macedonia includes only the two southern vilayets, and the line actually claimed and held as the northern boundary of Hellas runs a little to the north of the town of Monastir. The Bulgarian geographers, on the other hand, leave out certain districts on the west in which the population is overwhelmingly Moslem, and perhaps a corner in the south-west which is exclusively Hellene.

The Macedonia thus constituted has no more national identity or cohesion than India. But the Christians on the whole outnumber the Moslems by probably about four to three, and if the European Powers could be wrought upon to ignore the Moslem element in the population, as is so constantly done

by European writers, and erect "Macedonia" into an autonomous state like Eastern Rumelia, Bulgaria would have the fairest prospect of repeating her former *coup*.

It was possibly with a view to some such result that Gladstone threw out the phrase "Macedonia for the Macedonians," a phrase which, be it said with all respect, could not have been used by any man of impartiality and intelligence who possessed a first-hand knowledge of the country. The Bulgarians were prompt to adopt it for use against the Turks, while keeping that of Macedonia for the Bulgars for use against the Greeks. Within the last few years, however, they have felt encouraged to lay claim openly to the remaining vilayet of Rumelia; the committee which directs the Folk War from Sofia has taken the name of "Macedonia-Adrianople," and bands of Comitadjis have been actively at work in the valley of the Maritza. It is therefore no longer necessary to demonstrate the mythical character of the "Macedonian" nationality in the eyes of every element in the Macedonian population.

In the meanwhile the Bulgarian historians, no less patriotic than the geographers, have made great strides since the time of Paisy. The kings of ancient Macedon are now included in the list of the "Tsars of Bulgaria," and stones with inscriptions in the Bulgarian dialect are being buried here and there in the disputed territory of Macedonia to await the curiosity of savants. The following extract from a Bulgarian schoolbook will show how the young idea is being taught to shoot in the ambitious little Principality :

"The Bulgarian race anciently formed the original population of Asia Minor, of the Balkan peninsula, of the whole valley of the Danube, and of the shores of the Black Sea to the mouth of the Don. At a later period the shores of the Ægean Sea were occupied by the Greeks, who forced part of the inhabitants to adopt the Hellenic tongue. But the basis of the population

has remained purely Bulgarian as far as Thermopylæ.

"The most celebrated sovereigns of Bulgarian nationality were, in antiquity, the kings Philip and Alexander the Great. These, after having conquered the whole of the Greek territories, extended the Bulgarian empire as far as India."

If these magnificent ideas are to inspire the future policy of Bulgaria, it is clear that Russia and Austria are not less threatened than Turkey and Greece, and that its English admirers will one day have to choose between their sympathy with the Folk and their allegiance to the sovereign who is styled Emperor of India.

### 15. *The Internal Organisation*

In the year 1890 the Principality pushed forward its outposts into Northern Macedonia by obtaining from the Porte the creation of two Exarchist bishoprics, to which others have since been added as the price of her friendship to Turkey. As a further means of detaching the Slave-speaking Macedonians from the Patriarchist or Greek fold, schools were everywhere set up in rivalry to those with which the Greeks had long before covered the country; but, except on the Bulgarian frontier, the mass of the Christian peasantry remained indifferent or hostile, in some cases preferring to pay the small fees demanded in the Hellenic schools rather than accept free education at Bulgarian hands.

The result of the struggle waged on these peaceful lines was thus summed up in an open letter addressed by a Bulgarian patriot to Prince Ferdinand in the year 1899:

"We can gain nothing more by the church and the school. The more the existing situation is prolonged the more ground our adversaries will gain. . . . That is why Bulgaria ought to take arms and possess her-

self by force of Macedonia, which otherwise will be for ever lost to her.”<sup>1</sup>

These words deserve to be carefully weighed, inasmuch as they explain the peculiar character of the Folk War. The “adversaries” here spoken of are not the Turks, but the Greeks. The Bulgars are perfectly sincere—not less sincere than the Russians—in desiring to see the Turks expelled. But they rely for that work on the action of the European Powers. Their business is to secure the inheritance, when it falls vacant, by the forcible imposition of a Bulgarian character on the Christian population, before the day of liberation arrives. It is true that they have continually spoken of liberating the country by a military invasion; but if that were their sole purpose they would welcome the aid of Servia and Greece, instead of rejecting every overture in that direction, as they have steadily done. They may have gone so far as to contemplate a single-handed attack on Turkey, but if so they have clearly aimed at securing beforehand such a support from the public opinion of Europe as would give to their enterprise the character of an intervention authorised and encouraged by the Powers.

In pursuance of this selfish policy, Bulgaria observed a neutrality friendly towards the Turks when Greece took arms in 1897, and when a joint movement on the part of all the Balkan States might have deprived the Sultan of half his European provinces. It is known that the Turks themselves were apprehensive of such a result, and that the Sultan personally exerted himself to avert hostilities.

The dramatic collapse of the Greek campaign, through causes which are partly a secret of international diplomacy, left that State crippled in strength and in reputation for a long time to come, and threw the field open to its rivals. The Hellenist element in Macedonia was profoundly discouraged, and all eyes

<sup>1</sup> For the full text of this remarkable manifesto, see below, p. 101.

were turned to Bulgaria as the future champion of the Christian cause.

Taking advantage of this feeling, the agents of the Principality, with the secret assistance of Russia, set to work to create the "Internal Organisation," purporting to be a union of all Macedonians, irrespective of race and creed, for the overthrow of the Turkish rule. At the same time Bulgaria was put forward as the friend by whose aid success was to be achieved, and almost from the first there was a strong undercurrent against the Patriarchate, and against Hellenism.

At the outset a considerable number of Patriarchists, including pure Hellenes, joined the Organisation without any suspicion of whither they were being led. In Servia, as well as Greece, every sympathy was shown towards the movement, and Tchakalaroff, who has since earned an evil renown by his atrocities against Greeks, is said to have been among the number of Macedonian Bulgars who made their way to Athens to obtain arms.

The mask was dropped by degrees. From the outset the proceedings of the Comitadjis, as the members of the Internal Organisation were styled, had assumed a terrorist character more in keeping with Bulgarian than Hellenist traditions. In many places the peasants were induced to support the movement by a promise that their Moslem landlords should be murdered. The promise was only too faithfully kept, but the villagers were not altogether satisfied when they found themselves coerced into paying as much or more in the form of taxes to the Internal Organisation, as they had paid in rent to the beys.

As the grip of the Organisation tightened on the villages the Greek priests and schoolmasters became the victims of a persecution which steadily increased in severity. At first they were merely ordered to preach and teach in the Bulgarian language, next they



**CAPTAIN "ATHALES BOUAS,"  
WOUNDED IN VICTORIOUS EN-  
COUNTER WITH COMITADJIS.**



**COMITADJI CHIEF YANKOFF, WHO  
OBTAINED ARMS IN ATHENS  
TO FIGHT THE TURKS AND  
USED THEM TO KILL GREEK  
PRIESTS IN MACEDONIA.**



were expelled from many places that they might be replaced by Bulgars, and finally they were denounced as obstacles in the path, who must be removed by assassination. At the same time the peasants generally were ordered to pass over to the Exarchate and declare themselves Bulgarians.

The reason given for these measures was that the Principality was preparing to come to the aid of the Macedonians, and was therefore entitled to their allegiance. In the same spirit the Bulgarian flag was adopted by the Comitadji bands. Nevertheless, a cleavage began to develop itself, and has since become acute, between the Bulgarian party pure and simple, and that led by voivodes who seem to have cherished schemes of personal ambition, and to have preferred the position of independent brigand chiefs ruling the country by terror. One of these chiefs, Apostol, has since gone so far as to tender his services to the Government of Athens, offering to turn all the victims of his tyranny back from Exarchists into Patriarchists in return for a salary of £1,000 a year.

As a result of the anti-Hellenist turn given to the movement, many of the original members of the Internal Organisation left it, and the Exarchists and Patriarchists had come to blows as early as the year 1902. In the following year the long-expected insurrection broke out—if such a movement deserves such a name.

#### 16. *The Insurrection*

What actually happened was that the Comitadji leaders called out their followers, who took to the mountains and lived a life of rapine and murder for a few months. Many individual Moslems and some Greeks were murdered, and private houses were sacked and burnt; but there was no serious attempt to face the Turkish soldiery in the field. A few towns were occupied for a time, but abandoned on the approach of a Turkish force. The towns selected for



this form of liberation were Hellenist centres, and the only result—perhaps the only object—of the demonstration was to expose the Greek party to the vengeance of the Turks. In the case of one such town, Krushevo, the Bulgarian quarter was mysteriously spared, while that of the Greeks was laid in ashes.

Bulgaria failed to keep the promises held out to the insurgents of marching to their support, and, after a short and inglorious period spent chiefly in dodging the Turks among the mountains, the deluded peasants were disbanded and ordered to return to their homes. In many cases they found them in ruins, the Turkish authorities having meted out the same measure to the friends of the Comitadjis as the Comitadjis have meted out before and since to the victims of their warfare.

This armed demonstration, known to those who took part in it as the "revolution," had the effect of reviving interest in the affairs of Turkey. In spite of the amnesty immediately granted by the Sultan, the familiar cry of Turkish atrocities found a ready echo in sympathetic, as well as in interested, ears. An English charitable committee despatched agents to carry relief to the sufferers, and the Governments of Russia and Austria took a step forward towards detaching Macedonia from the Turkish empire.

### *17. The European Reforms*

Alongside of their half-hearted action on behalf of the emancipation of the Christian provinces of Turkey, the European Powers have for the last hundred years taken a benevolent interest in the lot of those Christians who were left under the Turkish rule. The tremendous disparity in point of civilisation and military strength between Christendom and Islam developed during that period has made it a moral impossibility for Europe to tolerate the existence at its doors of a state organised on the principle that

every Christian, as such, is inferior to a Moslem, and that although it has been constantly recognised, even by the class of Christian missionaries in the Levant, that the Turk is, man for man, really superior to those whom he governs. The spectacle of Turkish soldiers standing with fixed bayonets to restrain Latin and Greek and Armenian monks from tearing each other to pieces at the very tomb of the Christian Saviour has had a discouraging effect on the Christian sympathies of the West.

The first to perceive the danger to the Turkish empire arising from this cause were the Sultans themselves. Seeing that the oppression of their Christian subjects was being put forward by the Governments of Austria and Russia as a reason for the dismemberment of Turkey, they exercised a wise statesmanship in seeking to remove the grievances of the Christians, and to convert them into loyal subjects. The Servians, in the earlier stages of their national struggle, were actually encouraged from Constantinople, and supported against the local Turkish aristocracy.

Unfortunately these patriotic designs, which present a close parallel with those of the present Young Turk party, were frustrated by the class of Turks which stood to lose by them in their power and wealth. The rebellion of the celebrated Passvan Oglou, who erected a robber state on the Danube, like that of Ali Pasha in Epirus, was an expression of the discontent of the old-fashioned Turks with the liberal policy of the Sultans. The suppression of the Janissaries was similarly due to their obstinate opposition to the same policy.

The cause of reaction triumphed, although there never have been wanting Turkish statesmen wise enough to see in which direction the national safety was to be sought, and patriotic enough to make the necessary sacrifices of Mohammedan privilege. The difficulty has been with public opinion, which is as

powerful in a despotism as in a republic. There have been many admirable reforms on paper; the laws of Turkey are as good as any in the world; but they have never been fairly executed. Individual character counts for far more in the East than in the West, and while good pashas have given happiness and prosperity to one province, bad pashas have brought misery to its neighbour.

The last effort of the kind was the constitution of Midhat Pasha, proclaimed in 1876, which conceded well-nigh everything that any Western people has obtained. Set up in the midst of rebellion, and on the eve of the Russian war, it must be doubted whether it possessed any inherent strength in the shape of support from Moslem opinion. But what proved fatal to its continuance was the unfortunate series of events which brought about the accession to the throne of Abdul Hamid II.

A young man, of nervous and melancholic temperament, the new Sultan had watched from the depth of the harem the deposition of two predecessors within the short space of six months, and their downfall had been the work of the man who now placed him on the throne. Clearly it must have appeared to him that his own tenure was at the mercy of the all-powerful Vizier, and that it was a question whether the Caliphs were to hold their office during the pleasure of the Grand Vizier, or the Grand Viziers to hold theirs during the pleasure of the Caliph. It was inevitable that he should decide for the latter alternative, and that he should seek the support of the men who were opposed to Midhat and to his policy. The reforming Vizier fell, and his reforms with him.

These considerations explain the subsequent course of the reign. The foremost care of the Sultan has been to secure himself from the fate of Abdul Aziz and Murad, and in doing so he has surrounded himself with men whose whole interest lay in rendering their master absolute.

The short-sighted or malevolent policy of the Powers in confining their interest to the welfare of the Christian races, has thrown into relief the Sultan's position as defender of the Mohammedan faith, while it has naturally tended to embitter the Moslems generally against their fellow-subjects. We have only to think of the effect likely to be produced on English feeling—the effect that was produced in the past—by the interference of Roman Catholic Powers on behalf of the Irish. The Christians have suffered the fate of the boy whom Don Quixote forbade his master to flog, and who received a worse beating than ever as soon as his champion's back was turned.

It would be folly to credit the sovereign of Turkey with any personal ill-will towards his Christian subjects. For many years before their unfortunate rebellion the Armenians enjoyed almost a monopoly of government posts in Constantinople, and it was this very circumstance which gave a dangerous aspect to a rising which was utterly hopeless in the absence of European support, and explained, if it did not excuse, the panic whose horrors are still fresh in the public mind.

Apart from the suppression of that revolt, the services which Abdul Hamid II. has rendered to his country are conspicuous and memorable. He has restored Turkey to the rank of a great military power, he has erected an admirable system of education open to all creeds and races, and designed to promote concord between them, and he has crowned the work of his reign by laying a railway into the heart of Arabia, and installing the electric light in the tomb of the Prophet. By the exercise of rare diplomatic gifts, he has contrived to disunite the European Concert, and to hold at bay for thirty years the forces, external and internal, that threatened speedy dissolution to the empire. The very Powers that looked upon Turkey as their natural prey have been converted into its protectors, and the year 1897

witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of the united navies of Christendom beleaguering the island of Crete in order to suppress an insurrection of Christians against the successor of Mohammed.

The action of the Concert has thus gradually taken the form of a diplomatic blockade, every move towards active intervention on the part of one Power being neutralised by the opposition of another. The only Powers which have sincerely desired to see a reformed Turkey have been France and England, but the action of the former of these has been handicapped by her alliance with Russia, and her acknowledged fear of Germany; and the diplomacy of Great Britain has been singularly ineffective and irritating. Lord Currie, while ambassador in Constantinople, pressed upon the Sultan a scheme of reform for Macedonia, which involved the setting up of something like county councils. The Sultan professed himself willing to accept it if England would undertake to support him against the opposition of those Powers which were interested in promoting discontent rather than content in his dominions. Our ambassador was not authorised to give that assurance, and the Sultan declared himself unable to move. Lord Currie then sought to encourage the constitutional party in Turkey to wrest the control of affairs from the Palace, with equally abortive results.

The immediate consequence of these failures was that the British Foreign Office despaired of Turkey. The language of Lord Salisbury became little less menacing than that of Gladstone, and the next step was to entrust the work of reform in Macedonia to the two Powers most interested in defeating the reform of Turkey from within.

The Austrian and Russian governments drew up a scheme whose obvious tendency was to detach the three vilayets to which it applied from the Ottoman empire, while keeping their ultimate fate in abeyance. The Sultan was allowed to nominate a loyal Vizier

of his own, Hilmi Hussein Pasha, as Inspector-General, that is to say, viceroy, of the three vilayets; but Hilmi Pasha was required to administer them under the supervision and control of an Austrian and a Russian Civil Agent. A board on which all the Powers were represented took over the control of the finances, and a gendarmery under European officers was established, with an evident view to replacing the Turkish military forces.

A fuller insight into the working of this patchwork scheme will be afforded in the following pages. The important thing was that it entirely failed to pacify the country, but seemed rather to stimulate the ambitions of Bulgaria, and the consequent activity of the Christian bands.

The two Governments had accompanied their scheme by a proposal or promise that Macedonia should thereafter be partitioned into spheres of influence, according to the national character of the inhabitants; language which seemed to point to the creation of a series of Eastern Rumelias, a Greek one in the South, and Bulgarian and Servian ones along the frontiers of those states, for subsequent annexation to them. They declared that in any such partition no effect would be given to changes of creed or nationality brought about by force in the meanwhile; but this proviso was treated by the Internal Organisation with the contempt which it probably deserved.

The complete scheme was launched in the year 1903. In 1904 the Folk War entered upon its last phase, which continued down to the Turkish Revolution.

### 18. *Last Phase of the Folk War*

The first result of these weak and tentative measures upon the Bulgarian propaganda was to stimulate it on the criminal and anarchist side. The policy of open insurrection against the Turks was abandoned; it was all Christendom which was now held respon-

sible for the ills of Macedonia, and among the methods used to coerce Christendom have been the kidnapping of British officers and American missionaries, and the use of dynamite against a French ship in the port of Salonika—the latter outrage being further inspired by the wish to convince Europe that Salonika is a Bulgarian town. Extremists in Sofia have even talked of poisoning the water-supply of London and Paris, in order to terrorise the Powers into granting their full demands.

All that is a new, but quite natural, development of anarchist logic. It is no longer the tyrant who is marked out for attack, but the liberator who is too slow in coming to the rescue. What is really remarkable, and what is menacing for the future of civilisation, is that this logic, and these methods, should be employed, no longer by an underground sect of fanatics, reprobated by public opinion, and hunted down by the police, but by a party patronised by, and acting in the interest of, a European Government aiming at territorial expansion at the expense of its neighbours; that the balance of public opinion in Europe should have leant in favour of the propagandists, that their worst atrocities should have been attenuated or excused in the conservative press; and that not one of the Powers should have shown the least disposition to check the evil at its source by a firm attitude towards the government of Sofia.

The Bulgarian state has set a precedent which is likely to be followed in the near future at the expense of the two Powers which have done the most to foster its ambitions, namely, Russia and Great Britain. Yet she has remained the pet of diplomacy, and the whole weight of public opinion has been deflected against the victims of her ruthless propaganda.

As early as the year 1902 the British Consul-General Biliotti, by no means a Philhellene, wrote from Salonika to his Government that the Greeks

would infallibly be driven to retaliate if the Bulgarian atrocities continued. During the next two years refugees poured into Athens from all parts of Macedonia, to relate their sufferings and implore the sympathy of their Hellenic brethren. A Macedonian Committee was formed in the Greek capital, and remonstrances and appeals were addressed to the deaf ears of the Powers and the Western press. The Russian Minister in Athens declined to receive a copy of a resolution passed by a mass meeting of the Macedonian refugees, asking for the protection of the Powers. To add to the exasperation of the Greeks, they were publicly taunted in the European press with being afraid to take up arms in their own defence.<sup>1</sup>

The position of the Greeks with regard to the Bulgars by this time corresponded with that of their ancestors towards Philip of Macedon, as pithily put by Demosthenes,—“We are at peace with him, but he is at war with us.” By the end of 1904 there had been 517 murders, or attempted murders, of Greeks by Bulgars in the two vilayets of Monastir and Salonika.<sup>2</sup>

In the autumn of that year the cup was full, and a band led by a Greek officer, and composed of Macedonian refugees and volunteers from all parts of Greece, crossed the frontier to succour the victims of the Internal Organisation. Within six months the whole southern district had been nearly freed from

<sup>1</sup> “No Greek band was ever seen in the flesh, or heard of again.” *The Balkans from Within*, by Reginald Wyon, 1904, p. 19. This deplorable sneer had hardly found its way into print when the first Greek band crossed the frontier on its errand of deliverance and vengeance.

<sup>2</sup> A detailed statement of these atrocities is given in *Crimes Bulgares*, Paris, 1907. The Patriarchate has published at Constantinople a list of 643 murders of the most harrowing description, reported to it by the Greek bishops in Rumelia between 1899 and 1905. The method of execution in each case is given thus: “Cut to small pieces,” “by tortures,” “by thrashing,” “burnt alive,” “drowned,” “sawn, after great torture,” etc.



the terrorists, and the Comitadjis have since been held in check along the Monastir line.

The Greek bands, distinguished by the name of Antartes, were organised differently from their opponents. The plan pursued by the Internal Organisation has been for an officer or voivode to come from Sofia with a small group of followers, distribute arms to the young men of an Exarchist village, and then lead them to raids on their Patriarchist neighbours. Even the Exarchist villages have been heavily taxed, and not only has the war paid for the war, but the most popular and successful voivodes have amassed considerable wealth which they have carried off to spend in Sofia and in the capitals of Europe.

The Greek bands were supplied with funds from Athens, and forbidden to take anything from the peasants without payment. They were placed under officers of education, whose instructions were to act on the defensive, to confine themselves to the work of delivering Patriarchist villages from the reign of terror, and to refrain from any imitation of the horrors of the Comitadji warfare. In a country like Rumelia, such orders are more easily given than obeyed. The Greek bands contained too many Macedonians who had seen their aged fathers, their wives, and even their little children, tortured and slain by their Exarchist neighbours. Morally and intellectually, there is little difference between the Slave-speaking peasants who adhere to either Church. There is no room to doubt that the Greek vengeance in many cases equalled the crimes that had provoked it in ruthlessness, although of course in point of guilt the gulf is immeasurable between the first shedder of blood and its avenger.

Such has been the essential character of the war which was still actively raging in the Macedonian vilayets when the revolt of the Turkish army produced a momentary lull. The Folk War is probably a unique episode in the history of the world. Be-

ginning as an insurrectionary movement of Christians against the Turkish Government, it has changed into an underground civil war between two peasant factions, each supported from abroad by States ambitious of territorial gain. The Turkish troops have exerted themselves impartially in the capture and destruction of all the combatants, but the bands as a rule have shunned encounters with the Turks, with whom the Greeks profess to have no quarrel, and the Comitadjis no concern. Generally speaking, the Bulgarian bands have equally shunned anything like a stand-up fight with the Greeks, by whom they have been worsted on almost every occasion.<sup>1</sup> They have preferred to live on the plunder of the unarmed villages; their action has degenerated more and more into brigandage pure and simple, and they have become at last a scourge to their own party.<sup>2</sup>

The most serious development of all, from the point of view of international law, was reached in the summer of 1906, when the Bulgars resolved to revenge themselves for their defeats in Macedonia by falling upon the Hellenes who were in their power on the soil of the Principality. Armed bands, organised under the eyes of the Government of Sofia, and acting in the presence of the police, raided the Greek cities of the Black Sea coast, burning the schools and churches, sacking private houses, and driving a population of forty thousand Hellenes out of a country in which they had maintained themselves through the worst ages of Turkish domination.

These enormities went unrebuked, and almost unnoticed, by the Western press, and by the Powers which had solemnly guaranteed the rights of this defenceless people by the international act known as the Organic Statute of Eastern Rumelia.

The extraordinary patronage extended to this

<sup>1</sup> See the words of the Bulgarian Premier quoted below, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> See the strong language of the Bulgarian Commercial Agent of Monastir, and of the Exarchist bishop of Uskub, below, pp. 251-2.

anarchist State by the European Governments is due to motives which are easily seen. By whatever ingenious reasoning Bulgaria has succeeded in persuading Russia that she is the best friend, and Great Britain that she is the worst foe, of Russian ambitions in the Mediterranean, it is undoubtedly the case that these contradictory beliefs are firmly held. When Abdul Hamid II. was assured that a strong Bulgaria would be a wall between him and Russia he had the wisdom to reply that a wall might fall on either side.

The strong tide of public opinion in the same direction must be attributed mainly to the belief that Bulgaria is the State destined to overthrow the Turkish power in Europe, and to take its place. The true objective of this warfare has been sedulously concealed from the party in Europe which clings to the illusions of Gladstone, and believes that all the ills of Turkey are due to the vices of the Turks. It has been forgotten that the past history of the Bulgar people is that of a race at least as savage as their conquerors. The student of the Folk War must hesitate to pronounce them more humane or more civilised at the present hour.

Unhappily public opinion seldom reasons, and never willingly listens to more than one side of a question. The Greeks have not been allowed to protest that they would rather trust themselves to the mercies of Turkish soldiers than to those of the liberators of Macedonia. It is scarcely necessary to add that the same writers who taunted them with cowardice in not standing on their defence have been the foremost and fiercest in denouncing the action of their bands ever since.

To complete the orgy of frenzied prejudice, the Turks have been charged with a want of sincerity in the pursuit of the Christian bands, the suggestion being that they have looked on with satisfaction at the spectacle of Christians exterminating each other.

The best answer to that particular calumny has now been given by the immediate effect of the Turkish revolution in bringing the strife to a halt.

### 19. *The Revolution*

In spite of the truly wonderful skill with which the Turkish Sultan has succeeded in holding the external and internal foes of the empire at bay for the last thirty years, he has not been able to prevent the action of the Powers gradually assuming a character deeply mortifying to Turkish patriotism. The Concert of Europe, however lacking in union and energy, has been visibly encroaching on the independence of Turkey as a sovereign state. Its machinery, the council of the six ambassadors in Constantinople, has worn all the appearance of a foreign tribunal exercising an authority over the Sultan similar to that exercised over the Khedive of Egypt by the British Agent. When the Powers proceeded deliberately to detach the Macedonian vilayets from the rest of the empire it became evident that Turkey had nothing to hope from continuing to submit to this protectorate.

These considerations explain the character of the revolution of 1908, and the almost universal support it received in every quarter of the empire. It was a national movement on the part of the Turkish nation at large to shake off the suzerainty of Europe, and avert the dismemberment of their country. The desire for constitutional government was chiefly felt by the educated class, which formed the party of Young Turks. The hatred inspired by the Palace clique, with its apparatus of spies and corruption, was more general. But neither of these causes produced the revolution.

The crisis was precipitated, like most others of the same kind, by the pressure of financial necessities. The public treasury was empty, and for some months previously a series of sporadic mutinies in various

parts of the empire had shown that the authority of the central Government was seriously enfeebled, and that the army could be no longer reckoned upon for its defence. Spark after spark of revolt had flashed and flickered out when the last one caught the inflammable material, and in a few hours the whole country was ablaze.

At this moment it was, above all, fortunate that the party of the Young Turks was at hand, with its well-thought-out programme, and its disciplined organisation, to step in and take over the direction of affairs. What might have been a mere military revolution, resulting in nothing but a change of dynasty, was thus transformed into the orderly establishment of a constitutional government. It is impossible to praise too highly the prudence and wisdom with which the Young Turks have so far controlled the course of events; and the unselfishness with which they have refrained from seeking personal advantages and rewards is not less remarkable.

The most solid result, so far obtained, is that the ruling race of the empire is now committed as a whole to that policy which it unwisely rejected a century ago. Henceforth we may look to see the efforts of Turkish statesmanship steadily directed to conciliating the Christians, to breaking down the distinctions of race and creed, and to welding all classes into one nationality. A second result, not less valuable, should be the regeneration of the character of the Turkish nation in the eyes of Europe. Nothing can be more gratifying than the cordial spirit in which the new régime has been received, even in quarters so hostile to Turkey in the past as the Russian empire. The Turks, by manifesting all that is best in themselves, seem to have brought out all that is best in their opponents.

For the moment, the result has not been less happy on the Christians of the Balkans. If the Governments of Sofia and Athens have exercised some reserve in their attitude towards the revolution, there has been

no hesitation on the part of the peoples. The Greeks have been almost afraid to betray the full extent of their joy, lest they should alarm the more conservative element among the Turks. The enthusiasm of the Bulgars has effervesced in excursions to Constantinople to offer fraternal greetings to the liberators. Best of all, the Comitadjis and Antartes have very generally laid down their arms, and come in to fraternise with the Turks and with each other.

It is, of course, too much to hope that the old divergencies will not reappear as soon as the first ebullitions of sentiment are exhausted. To begin with, it is evident that the Christians regard the change in a totally different light from the Turks. To them it means the triumph of liberty, and hitherto liberty has been associated in their minds with the idea of their own national independence. In teaching them to abandon their separatist ambitions in favour of Ottoman patriotism, the statesmen of Turkey will encounter precisely the same difficulties that have confronted the Austrians in Hungary and Bohemia, the Germans in Posen and Alsace, and the British in Ireland, where constitutional privileges have been used as a weapon to secure independence. The conflict is inevitable between such tendencies and the aspiration of the Turks to regain the lost provinces of their empire, including Bosnia, Cyprus, and Egypt, if not Eastern Rumelia itself.

It is in its bearing on this future difficulty that the history of the Macedonian Folk War should prove of importance. It should teach the Greeks that, where they are not strong enough to make themselves independent, they may find themselves better off under the government of the Turk than the Slave. It should convince all parties that, if the Balkan races cannot adjust their mutual relations on a peaceful footing, their ultimate destiny must be to pass under an administration from outside. If these lessons are taken to heart there may be some chance for a policy

based on mutual concession, and having for its motto "All Friends Round the Balkans."

The following pages were written with the purpose of recommending such a policy to the peoples concerned, and to their sincere well-wishers in Europe.

## NOTE

### COMITADJI LITERATURE

Nothing can be more regrettable than that the body of Western sympathisers whose influence, were they united, might do so much to promote the peace and welfare of European Turkey, should reproduce the same divisions which exist out there, and thus exhibit the spectacle of partisans instead of impartial judges.

Unhappily, such has been the case, and there is too much truth in the reproach contained in a private letter from a correspondent in Athens to a friend on the English Balkan Committee :

"We must confess that it is most disheartening to see that the Liberal Press, especially *The Tribune*, does not only overlook all Greek grievances or arguments in their favour, but has lately started a systematic counter-campaign against Hellenism in general, reproducing and bringing forward before the eyes of the public all the abuse obviously obtained from Bulgarian sources.

"I quite understand your genuine sympathy and interest for the Macedonian cause, as also your eagerness to find an opportunity of visiting Bulgaria and Macedonia, and making inquiries on the spot, in order to form an accurate idea of what is really happening. We personally could wish for nothing better than that a way may be found to enable you to visit these countries, as we are perfectly sure that a frank and exact account, resulting from a careful inspection of the state of the above countries, without any prejudice for one party or the other, would be the most practical fashion of helping the Greek cause, and of enlightening the British Press.

"Our most ardent desire is that the truth, and only the truth, should be unfolded before the eyes of the civilised world by means of the British Press."

The newspaper particularly complained of is now defunct, but the gentleman chiefly responsible for its Grecophobia policy has now transferred his services to *The Daily News*, and I should feel myself wanting in courage if I did not draw the reader's attention to some of the evidences of bias against the Greeks and Turks which abound in his published volume on the Balkan question,<sup>1</sup> one of many similar ones which have appeared in the same political interest during recent years, and to which no reply has yet been made on the part of those assailed. The reputation, and even the livelihood, of a private man of letters is largely at the mercy of great organs of opinion like *The Daily News*; their grudges are often lasting, and they have the means of keeping up a vendetta long after the public has forgotten its origin; and the law of England does not afford that protection to assailed individuals which is afforded by the law of other countries, by requiring the signature of newspaper articles and the insertion of replies. In these circumstances I can only place myself in the hands of the public, and trust to its sense of fair play to protect me in the discharge of my duty to itself and to those who have appealed to it through me.

I shall confine myself here to quoting a single passage as an illustration of the tone which this writer has permitted himself to use towards a high ecclesiastic of the Greek Church, with whom he represents himself as having a conversation of a friendly, and even an intimate, character, the Archbishop of Castoria.<sup>2</sup>

"We began our conversation in Greek, but in a few minutes we had discovered that we had been at a

<sup>1</sup> *Macedonia*, by H. N. Brailsford, 1906.

<sup>2</sup> Another Greek Bishop is described by the writer as resembling "a rather holy seal." *Macedonia*, p. 199.



German university together. . . . His Beatitude seemed a modern of the moderns. Could this be the fanatic who persecuted Bulgarian peasants to force them into his Church?<sup>1</sup> Could this be the raging partisan who had massed his people to drive the schismatic Bulgarian Bishop from the town? In five minutes he had professed himself a philosopher. In ten minutes *he had avowed himself a freethinker.*"<sup>2</sup>

By common usage, the word "freethinker" in English denotes a man who is actively opposed to the Christian religion, and who assails it without respect for the feelings of Christians. A paper styled *The Freethinker* was in recent years prosecuted for blasphemy, on account of the offensive character of its cartoons. It is impossible to doubt that what the Archbishop must have said, if he said anything, was that he was a liberal theologian who did not share all the superstitions of the peasantry. And, on the writer's own showing, the conversation had taken the character of a friendly chat between old fellow-students on the subject of their former studies.

"And he had views on psychology. He had read his Lotze, and soon we were criticising the ethics of Wundt."<sup>3</sup>

It will be noticed how this writer prefers the method of insinuation to that of direct accusation in dealing with his old university comrade. After describing the photograph of a severed head, which he asserts hung in a conspicuous place on the wall of the Archbishop's room, he proceeds in this fashion:

"And then I remembered *the tale*. That head had belonged to a Bulgarian chief. A band of bravos in the Archbishop's pay had murdered him as he lay wounded in hiding. And *the tale* went on to tell how the murderers carried the bleeding trophy to the palace, and how the Archbishop had had it photographed, and paid its price in fifty pieces of gold."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not a particle of evidence is anywhere offered for this charge.

<sup>2</sup> *Macedonia*, p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

The writer does not pretend to have made the least effort to test the truth of this or any similar Comitadji tale. He does not dare to tell his readers that the tale is true. He insinuates it, like a drop of poison, into their minds and leaves it to do its work. Were a witness in an English court of justice to attempt to take away the character of the vilest criminal by such hearsay evidence he would be sternly silenced by the bench.

On a subsequent occasion, adds the same writer, the Archbishop confessed himself to be plotting against his sovereign.

"His Beatitude began to talk treason—in German. He assured me that his alliance with the Turks was only temporary. A great day was coming, when Hellenism would claim her own."<sup>1</sup>

Since his old fellow-student made these alleged confidences public in a book which has most probably been translated and read to the sovereign of Turkey, this Archbishop, the most energetic defender of the Greek peasantry against their enemies, has been removed from his diocese to Constantinople, where the reader shall see him, and hear his reply. Truly the Comitadjis are well served by their English friends.

I confess myself unable to understand how any writer could have imagined that he could help his argument by including such passages as those in a book intended to be read by English gentlemen.

<sup>1</sup> *Macedonia*, p.194.

## CHAPTER I

### OUT OF EUROPE

Europe and the Levant—Moslem refugees—An ideal settlement—  
Corfu—Grecophobia—Prosperity of Greece—Candour of the  
Greeks — Hellenist Refugees — Bulgarian atrocities — New  
Anchialos

I LEFT Europe in the beginning of November 1907. The Europe which plays the part of Providence for the Balkan world leaves off at the Adriatic Sea. The land which cradled European civilisation, the isle to which Europa came borne by the sacred bull, are no part of this Europe. It may include Russia for political purposes, but otherwise the term European means, in a Balkan ear, much what Frank meant in a Byzantine one. Europe, in short, is Latin Christendom; Paris is its capital, and French its language.

It calls for a distinct mental effort on the part of the ordinary Greek or Turk to realise that the English and Germans have dialects of their own, of which they are not ashamed, and which they find it easier to speak and read than French. A Greek, in speaking of the Piræus to an Englishman, will correct his own name, *Piræos*, to the French, *La Pirée*, and believe that he has made himself more intelligible. The Turks recognise French as the second official language of the country, the names of the streets and railway stations being written in Turkish and French. In Greece the language has a semi-official status, especially in the post-offices.

No one will grudge to France her position as the clearing-house of Western civilisation; but their exclusive dependence on French as a means of intercourse with Europe has done serious injury to the Greeks, and still more to the Turks. During the last few years Hellas has been the object of a most bitter and unscrupulous campaign of calumny in the English press, carried on in the interests of Bulgaria. The Government of Athens has endeavoured to combat these skilfully directed attacks by means of a weekly broadsheet, the *Bulletin d'Orient*, printed in Athens and in the French language. Any one who has ever been in the sub-editor's room of one of our great newspaper offices an hour or two before going to press will be able to understand what chance such a circular has of being read through in the search for some grain of fact suitable for British comprehension.

Judging by their press, and the contents of their booksellers' windows, the French public takes a far keener and more intelligent interest in Balkan affairs than does ours. But, unfortunately, France is not now a Power of the first class. If the support of England be worth having, it is worth while to take the right means to gain her ear.

The Turks, it is needless to say, have been for a much longer period the objects of a vituperation which has become a commonplace of English politics, and to which they have hardly attempted any reply. In Constantinople I was informed that there was not a single professor of English, and I met only two Turks in my whole journey who were able to converse in our language.

Turkey and Greece are the two Balkan States which have a sea-coast on the Mediterranean, and are pointed out by history as well as geography as our natural allies in the near East; and it is much to be regretted that they have not shown a stronger sense of the importance to themselves of cultivating

the means of closer intercourse with the chief Mediterranean Power.

In order to escape the miseries of the Italian railway to Brindisi, I took steamer from Trieste to the Piræus. At present the absence of railway communication makes Greece an island—a circumstance which has hindered her natural beauties and her glorious ruins from receiving their fair share of attention from travellers. One of the first results of the change in Turkey should be to secure the connection of the Greek railway system with the line from Vienna to Constantinople, and thus enable Greece to profit by that source of wealth which has given prosperity to Switzerland.

I sailed by the *Baron Beck*, of the excellent Austrian Lloyd service, than which there is no better in the Levant. The first port at which we called was the Austrian one of Gravosa, on the Dalmatian coast; and here, on the outset of my journey, I was presented with a side of the Balkan question which it has been the custom to overlook altogether.

A steam-launch puffed up to the side of the ship as she lay off the town. Looking down from the deck, I saw a group of men, women, and children, in number about twenty or thirty, poorly clad, and with woebegone looks. The men wore fezzes, the women were veiled. With them they had their portable property, a few quaintly decorated trunks, a quantity of rude bundles containing bedding, and some battered copper vessels. The whole party was in charge of a young man, also wearing a fez, but evidently of superior station, and under his direction they and their belongings were slowly transferred to the lower deck of the *Baron Beck*, where they squatted down with the patience of their race.

I asked who they were, and I learned that they were Moslem peasants emigrating from Bosnia to Turkish territory. Bosnia is a province adjoining the Macedonian region, and it was formerly the scene



GREEK REFUGEES FROM BULGARIA.



of very similar troubles. By one of those fictions which have done so much to bring diplomacy into discredit, it was still technically a part of the Ottoman empire. Actually it had been part of the Austrian empire for thirty years. It enjoyed all, and more than all, the reforms which have been proposed for Macedonia. It had become already what the Bulgarians and the Powers proposed that Macedonia should become—a land of law and order, of strict justice and regular taxation, where security for life and property is guaranteed to all the inhabitants without distinction. And these emigrants were leaving it. They were going to exchange the blessings of civilisation for life under the corrupt pashas, and the grinding tax-gatherers, and the lawless soldiery of Turkish tradition. They were going to exchange the rule of Francis Joseph II. for that of Abdul Hamid II.

A similar emigration has been going on from Thessaly, from Crete, from all the provinces which have passed under Christian rule. And, judging from the presence of the young man whom I remarked directing the embarkation, it is assisted emigration. The Commander of the Faithful has been summoning his scattered adherents to swell the garrison of his beleaguered empire.

I have been told that since the Powers began to tighten their grip on Macedonia the Moslems have begun to pack up and go from there also, moving across from Europe to Asia, to escape the coming of the Christians. Of that I came upon no first-hand evidence. On the other hand, I was informed in Athens that the Sultan had recently been buying Christian villages in Epirus as his private estate, and evicting the inhabitants, to replace them by Moslems, and our ambassador in Constantinople admitted to me that something of the kind had taken place.

The moral of these incidents is plain, and should be



profitable. The geographical conception of nationality is strange to this part of the world, and cannot be enforced without injustice and oppression. The theory of modern international law that nationality should depend on free choice has always been the law and practice of the Ottoman empire. A Bulgarian can become a Turk at any moment that he pleases by embracing Islam, a Greek can become a Bulgarian by joining the Exarchate, and of two brothers one may enter the Rumanian fold and the other the Servian. The most important factor in deciding the nationality is always religion; language and ethnological theories play a secondary part.

Where choice is free it will sometimes be governed by personal interest, and the Macedonians have been sneered at for their readiness to accept Servian and Rumanian bribes; but, on the whole, such a charge falls to the ground, and it must be pronounced that these people have shown remarkable steadfastness in the face of corruption and terrorism. When we consider the advantages offered to a convert to Islam, it is remarkable that so few conversions have taken place; and the peasantry, who for so many centuries have held out against the temptations of the Turks, are to-day holding out with equal obstinacy against the violences of the Bulgars.

Unless the new Government in Turkey succeeds where the Governments of Austria, of Bulgaria, and of Greece have failed, the Sultan's policy appears to offer the only hopeful solution of the difficulty. If these various peoples cannot dwell side by side in peace, the object must be to separate them by a gradual redistribution of the population on the lines of nationality. The most easy and obvious arrangement would be one collecting the Serbs and Bulgars in the north, and the Hellenes and Hellenising Macedonians in the south, with a central Moslem zone connecting Albania with Constantinople.

Such a suggestion is not put forward as a practical

policy capable of being immediately or speedily carried out. But it may serve as a useful test of the sincerity of the various parties, and of those who profess a concern in their welfare, whether emperors or journalists. If we see that their actions or their arguments tend in some other direction than that of the free development of each element in the population, we may feel sure that their interest is not quite impartial, or not quite disinterested.

Our second stopping-place was the Greek isle of Kerkyra, known to the medieval Latinist as Corcyra, and to the vulgar as Corfu. The exquisite scenery of the island, with its glorious views of the snow-clad Albanian mountains, has recently attracted an Emperor whose travels sometimes combine pleasure with business. Throughout the world of Islam his Imperial Majesty is considered as the Defender of the Faith. I have met Young Turks who professed to think that the Emperor's affection for their country resembled the boa-constrictor's for the rabbit; they argued that Germany was pushing Austria down to Salonika, and getting ready to follow and take over her acquisitions. But that is looking rather far ahead. When we read in the papers one day that the Sultan has bought twenty motor-cars from a German firm, and the next day that the German Ambassador has vetoed the Anglo-Russian reform proposals, we seem to be in the presence of a simple commercial transaction.

In spite of its illustrious patron, the isle of Kerkyra is almost unvisited by tourists. A year or two ago the Greeks decided on an effort to attract pleasure-seekers, and they got as far as building a casino. Then some one warned them that "Europe" would be shocked by anything in the nature of gambling, and the casino has never been opened. A nation that is on its promotion must be upon its good behaviour.

Those who are aware of the extent to which national interests may suffer from popular prejudices, which are often entirely unjust, will understand my motive

for recording an incident of the voyage out which would be trivial enough in itself, did it not serve to throw a light on some of the causes which have influenced public opinion against the Hellenic cause. On my return voyage we had on board an Italian merchant who had evidently done business with Greeks, with less advantage to himself than to them. He denounced their nation in no measured terms, winding up with the remark that the Bulgarians had driven them out like dogs.

"And what is your opinion of the Bulgars?" I inquired.

"Still worse!" was the emphatic response.

During the voyage out I made the acquaintance of an Englishman of that too common type which goes about the world judging all mankind by the English standard, and unable to recognise that his own nation may have faults in the eyes of foreign nations, not less serious than theirs are in his. He condemned the unfortunate Greeks in the same sweeping manner as my Italian friend, and warned me earnestly against reposing the slightest trust in them. When I informed him that I had made up a party to play bridge with three Greek gentlemen on board, he gazed on me in consternation as he pronounced—"Ah, the Greeks know how to play cards!"

Of the Greeks as business men I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. My experience of them as card-players is that they are more trustful and generous than ourselves, seldom claiming the penalty for an exposed card, or a careless revoke at the end of a hand. On this occasion, as it happened, I rose from the table the principal, if not the only, winner. One of my companions paid me ten francs too much—a mistake which I did not discover till he had left the boat, so that I can only trust his judgment of Englishmen is more charitable than my mentor's judgment of Greeks. The second player turned out to be the owner of a silver-mine. The third was a banker in Salonika,

where he afterwards advanced me sixty pounds, and declined to take an acknowledgment.

There is an old Oxford joke about a pamphlet which some one had in preparation on "The Existence of Foreigners, its Cause and its Cure." More than once during my journey I was tempted to fear that this work had actually seen the light, and that it formed part of the library of more than one British Consulate. What can be more hopeless, what can be more helpless, than to travel through the world carrying everywhere the air of Clapham Common? The man who has resided in Macedonia for fifty years, if he have not sympathy, will know no more about it than if he had never left home.

The last time I had entered the famous port of Themistocles it was full of transports bringing Greek volunteers from all parts of the Levant, and taking them on to Arta and Volo, the frontier. This time all was peaceful. The usual Russian warship, in its dark green paint, lay in the outer harbour alongside of some Greek warships in grey. Queen Olga is an Admiral of the Russian navy, and this kindly attention on the part of the Russian Government has helped the prosperity of the port. The inner harbour was crowded with shipping under the blue-and-white flag of Hellas, and among the vessels ranged along the quay I recognised the *Argolis*, in which I had run the blockade of Crete ten years before. Its old commander, Captain Koukoudakes, came to see me while I was in Athens. We did not know each other's speech, but we shook hands silently, while we recalled that dark night off the rocky coast when the flare of cannon lit the sky on one hand and on the other the searchlights raked every wave.

The harbour of Piræus was the first evidence I found of the amazing recovery made by the Greek kingdom from the disasters of the war. The tonnage of steam-shipping under the Greek flag has risen in ten years from 96,358 to 288,573, and of the 3,114,873

tons entered and cleared at the Piræus in 1906, one-third, or 983,531 tons, was Greek. All over the Levant, and far up the Black Sea, the Greek flag is taking the first place, and already plans are being made to establish a line across the Atlantic. There could be no more encouraging sign for the future than this national revival. The modern Greek is developing the traits of his ancestor, and Ithaca has become the seat of a nautical school.

As soon as the steamer had cast anchor a boat came alongside, and from it stepped out two friends who had kindly come to look after me, Mr. Philip Chrysoveloni and Mr. Nicolas Paspatis. Both of these gentlemen spoke English perfectly, Mr. Chrysoveloni having been brought up in Manchester, and Mr. Paspatis having lived some time in Liverpool. They and the group of friends with whom they are associated represent a new Greece, a Greece which has taken to heart the bitter lesson of 1897, and is setting itself to work soberly and earnestly to build up the national greatness on a sound basis, a basis of education and mercantile expansion, of public works and administrative reform. They have much reason to feel satisfied with the progress made already. There are few better symptoms of national prosperity than the rate of exchange, and the drachma, which shortly after the war fell to 40, to-day stands at 27, only slightly lower than the Italian lira. I may add that the Greek Funds have become one of the finest investments in the market. Not only is the interest of over 4 per cent. secured by an International Commission, but the operation of the sinking fund, which must ultimately raise the price of the stock to par, sends up its value automatically every year.

It will be seen, of course, that I was received in Athens in the character of a friend. Indeed, my old acquaintance, Mr. Levidis, whom I had formerly known as Minister of Marine, and whom I now found President of the Chamber, was good enough to introduce

me as, not a Philhellene, but a Hellene. But I do not think that the interests of my inquiry suffered from this; on the contrary, I think they gained. A client is likely to speak more freely to his counsel than to the judge. The friends whom I found in Athens asked me to be frank with them, and I think they were frank with me. When they showed me a map of Macedonia prepared by some enthusiast according to his wishes rather than his information, they warned me plainly that its author had been too liberal in his use of the blue paint. They also informed me beforehand that the prevailing dialect of the peasantry was Slave; in fact, they used the word "Bulgarian" to characterise it, and it was one of my own discoveries, later on, that the peasants are now rejecting that name, and calling their patois "Macedonian," in order to mark their antipathy to the Bulgarian yoke.

I do not pretend that this candour and straightforwardness marks all the public statements put forward from the Greek side, nor that it marked all the Greeks with whom I was brought into contact; but, generally speaking, I found them anxious to deal fairly with me, and fairly with the question as between themselves and the other Christian peoples. Their demand cannot be better expressed than in the words addressed to me by Mr. Baltazzi, a statesman who takes a special interest in Macedonian affairs, and who has since received the portfolio of Foreign Affairs:

"What we wish is to see peace restored, and then that the people should be allowed to decide for themselves which nationality they prefer."

It would be difficult to put in simpler terms a policy to which it should be difficult for any Liberal to take exception.

Perhaps the strongest evidence of sincerity given by the Greeks is their willingness to submit the whole

question, and all questions between them and the other Balkan States, to arbitration. They have at present a serious misunderstanding with the Rumanians. I was informed in Athens that the Greek Government had requested the Rumanian Government to submit this difference to the Hague tribunal, and that the Rumanian Government had refused.

As we were being rowed ashore my friends pointed out to me an open place on the west side of the harbour.

"We were sorry you did not come yesterday. You would have seen all that space covered with the tents of the refugees waiting to embark. There were eight hundred of them. But they left yesterday for Thessaly."

Poor, generous little kingdom, ever ready, with its arms open, to afford an asylum to the children of Hellas in their distress! The last time I had come to Piræus I had found its streets swarming with Cretan refugees. Now I came back, after ten years, and lo! a fresh burden laid upon the shoulders of the mother-state.

The refugees I had seen before were insurgents, fleeing from Turkish territory as the result of a conflict provoked by themselves. From whence did these new refugees come, and after what rebellion against the ruling power?

I put the question, expecting to hear that these were victims of the Folk War in Macedonia expelled from their homes for refusing to accept the Comitadji tyranny. The answer surprised me; I think it will surprise the reader:

"They are the Bulgarian refugees."

"Bulgarians?"

"Bulgarian subjects. They are Greeks from the cities on the Black Sea, cities which have always been Greek, but were handed over to the Bulgarians by the Treaty of Berlin."

"And why have they come away?"

"Their homes have been sacked and burnt by the Bulgarians, because they refused to give up the Greek language."

And so I came to hear of the most disgraceful episode in the recent history of Europe; an episode which, had it taken place on Turkish soil, would have brought the ironclads of half Europe to the spot; but which, because it took place on the soil of this foundling State adopted by the European Concert, has been suffered to pass without punishment, and almost without protest.

In pursuance of the rule I had laid down for myself to seek first-hand evidence wherever obtainable, I went out the next day to a large building on the outskirts of Athens which has been assigned by the Government as a temporary home for some of these unfortunates.

I found the building swarming with men, women, and children, all in a state of destitution, and dependent for their daily bread upon the bounty of the Government. Among them were priests, schoolmasters, carpenters, corn-factors, farmers, and representatives of all sorts of industries. And it was characteristic of Hellas that in this half-famished refuge, amid all this distress, means had been found to equip a school-room, and the schoolmaster had called his little exiles round him and was teaching them again.

It was the schoolmaster who told me their story, in the presence of a group of fellow-refugees.

They were from Anchialos, a town of 6,000 inhabitants, the great majority Hellenes. The population had given no offence whatever to the Bulgarian authorities, except the one unpardonable offence of continuing to speak their own language and worship in their own church. In doing this they were protected by the explicit language of the Treaty of Berlin, and the Organic Statute of Eastern Rumelia, signed by the representative of Great Britain.



"The chief languages of the country—Turkish, Bulgarian and Greek—shall be used in the Province, as well by the authorities as by private persons, in their relations with these latter, conformably to the following rules."<sup>1</sup>

"In the courts the citizens shall have the right to use one of the three chief languages at their choice."<sup>2</sup>

"Education shall be free."<sup>3</sup>

"The different communities shall be obliged to provide the charges which are already incumbent on them for the support of their educational and benevolent institutions."<sup>4</sup>

"No religious community shall be forced to introduce into its schools a language other than its own."<sup>5</sup>

"Every one shall be free to profess his own religion, and shall enjoy equal protection on the part of the authorities in the exercise of his worship."<sup>6</sup>

These privileges were no greater than have been enjoyed by the Christians in the Turkish empire for five hundred years, and are enjoyed by them to-day. The Greeks of Eastern Rumelia had done nothing to forfeit them; they suffered for the opposition offered by their brethren elsewhere to the Comitadji warfare. The Bulgarian Government can hardly decline responsibility for outrages committed within its own borders, and in the presence of its own police.

Anchialos was attacked on August 12, 1906. The inhabitants knew what was in store for them; already the Greek quarters of Varna, Philippopolis, Stenimachos and Burgas had seen their churches, their schools, and their hospitals sacked or destroyed by their Bulgarian fellow-citizens, their shops looted, and those of them who resisted beaten or slain—and not a Foreign Office in Europe had interfered.

Anchialos was an almost purely Greek town, and it was necessary to invade it from outside. On the morning of the fatal day a band of more than one hundred armed men appeared in the streets at day-

<sup>1</sup> Organic Statute, Art. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Art. 344.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Art. 359.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Art. 38.

<sup>6</sup> Art. 28.

break and began firing in all directions. The Greeks took refuge in their church, which they defended so well that three of their assailants were killed, and the rest barricaded themselves in the Turkish mosque. Reinforcements arrived, and about twenty of the Greeks fell, besides a great number of wounded. At last the Bulgars set fire to the town, the Greek portion, containing nine hundred houses and shops, being completely destroyed.<sup>1</sup>

The witness whom I questioned assured me that the gendarmes were not only present, but assisting the invaders. He added that the assailants of the town had brought carts with them to carry off the pillage. He believed, but would not positively assert, that the whole attack was planned and directed by the Comitadji leader, Tchakalaroff, whose portrait is given in a recent pro-Bulgarian publication, apparently for the admiration of the reader.<sup>2</sup>

But this witness is a Greek. His testimony is not above suspicion. Let us call a witness from the other side. Mr. Natchevitch, late Bulgarian Diplomatic Agent at Constantinople, threw up his post as a protest against the Macedonian policy of his Government.

In his own words :

"Because I was too deeply ashamed to look the world in the face. My idol was very different from that of Daskaloff & Co. They dream of nothing but war upon the Greeks, persecution, ruin, and destruction of them on Bulgarian soil. Their means are brigandage, sedition, and atrocity. And it is this land of anarchy which poses as the saviour of Macedonia !" <sup>3</sup>

And this is how he refers to the events which culminated in the sack of Anchialos.

<sup>1</sup> For a full account of these outrages the reader is referred to a recent pamphlet, *A Searchlight on the Balkans*, by Ulysses.

<sup>2</sup> *Macedonia*, by H. N. Brailsford, 1906, p. 150.

<sup>3</sup> *Changova Vetcherna Pochta*, August 21, 1907 (N.S.).

"At Rustchuk, Philippopolis, Anchialos, and other places Mr. Daskaloff's heroic friends brought waggons, which they piled up with goods and furniture from the sack of private Hellenic citizens. Buchay taught me long ago to distrust a 'patriotism' which is lucrative to the patriots; he taught me that pillage and robbery often masquerade in the garb of patriotism."

But perhaps Mr. Natchevitch is also a tainted witness. He may be influenced by his private griefs in assailing the Government from whose service he resigned. Let us read the reply to his censures offered by the head of that Government, Mr. Ratcho Petroff.

"My own views as to the unfortunate incident at Anchialos, and as to the extent to which both sides were responsible, are well known. Everyone will remember my threats to the patriots, and it will also be remembered that the occasion gave rise to a conflict between the mob and the army, resulting in the death of three of those patriots, who, although they lacked courage to measure themselves against the Greek bands, were yet brave enough to attack a foreign Agency: which acts of violence we condemned and put down by force of arms. Mr. Natchevitch blames us for not having prevented the attack on Anchialos,<sup>1</sup> and for allowing Macedonians to penetrate, greedy for spoil, into the burning town—a fact which has compromised our position in the eyes of the European public."<sup>2</sup>

And so forth. One would be glad to think that these things had compromised the position of Bulgaria in the eyes of the European public, but of that there is no sign at present. With the appearance of one British or Russian warship at the mouth of the Danube the Folk War in Rumelia would have long ago come to an end.

It is a mistake, too often made, to suppose that the Folk War is a war of religion. Nothing could be

<sup>1</sup> Preceded by numerous similar outrages during more than three weeks.

<sup>2</sup> *Changova Velicherna Pochta*, August 15, 1907 (N.S.). For fuller extracts see the *Hellenic Herald*, October, 1907.

farther from the case. The Patriarch himself, unlike the Pope, is a Greek first and a priest afterwards. The Exarchate is simply a political contrivance for enabling the Bulgarians to emancipate themselves from the ecclesiastical dominion of Hellas.

I found that the Anchialite refugees thought much less of their church than of their language. They attributed the enmity of the Folk to their being Hellenes, and not to their being Patriarchists. And their feeling is reflected in the action of the Bulgarian Government. The Greek churches in Eastern Rumelia have now been reopened. The Greek schools are still closed.

During the eighteen months between July 1906 and December 1907 forty thousand Greeks have been compelled to quit the soil of Eastern Rumelia, leaving behind them their lands, their houses, and their whole worldly wealth. And where have they sought refuge?

Ten thousand of them sought it in Turkey, in the dominions of a sovereign who has been more foully assailed than any sovereign in history for his supposed intolerance towards Christians. They sought under the Crescent the protection denied them under the Cross. They, like the Moslems of Austria, preferred the corrupt pashas, and the extortionate tax-gatherers, and the ferocious soldiery of Turkey, to the freedom and civilisation of Christian Bulgaria.

The Turks were not altogether pleased to receive them. The explanation given to me by Turkish officials since is that they feared that if these emigrants were allowed to settle in Thrace they would be pursued by the Bulgars, which would lead to strife along the border. That may be the whole explanation. Or it may be that the Turks feared that any increase in the Christian population would prove dangerous to their own security. Whatever be the truth as to that, ten thousand of the refugees have been permitted to settle in and around Constantinople. The rest have come to Greece.

And the poor, generous little kingdom, always playing the part of a good Samaritan to the distressed races in the Levant—the island of Crete alone has cost it £8,000,000 in the last fifty years, and it has sheltered Armenians as well as Greeks—the kingdom made them welcome. A Committee was formed in Athens to look after them, and £150,000 has already been spent in the relief of 23,589 refugees. Of this sum, according to an account furnished to me by the Committee, about £16,000 was raised by private subscription, the remainder being contributed by the State. The poor people are being settled in Thessaly, where five new towns are to be built for their reception; and on October 13, 1907, the Heir of Greece laid the first stone of New Anchialos.

The Ministers of the Great Powers who signed the Organic Statute of Eastern Rumelia ought to have been there.

If any one has wondered why there were Macedonian Christians unwilling to exchange the rule of Abdul Hamid II. for that of Prince Ferdinand, the history of Anchialos may enlighten him. The moral seems to be the same with that suggested to me at Gravosa. There is a deep incompatibility of temper between these various races which cannot be soothed away by the stock phrases of ignorant philanthropy, and which renders it criminal to place one under the rule of another. A similar forced emigration of Greeks has taken place from Rumania, though on a smaller scale, and without the same atrocities.

It is needless to remark on the obstacle presented by this incompatibility of temper to any union of the Balkan States. It is equally a hindrance to their internal development. The Bulgar is, as we have seen, a farmer; the Greek is a sailor. One is a countryman, and the other a townsman. Thus each is necessary to the other. The expulsion of the Greeks from the Black Sea ports is already being felt as a serious loss, and Armenians and Jews are

going thither to replace them. But the Jews are more unpopular in Rumania than the Greeks.

Unhappily, one result of this state of feeling is to make it most difficult for any one to mediate between the hostile parties. A British diplomatist accredited to one of the Balkan Courts complained to me that, because he tried to preserve an impartial attitude, he was regarded almost as an enemy by the people among whom he found himself. "I am their friend, but because I cannot become a blind partisan they think I am against them," he said. And it is to be feared that his complaint was justified. The peacemaker has not an easy task anywhere in the Balkans, and whoever tries to be the friend of two of these peoples may end by losing the confidence of both.

## CHAPTER II

### ATHENS REVISITED

The *Grande-Bretagne*—Greek hospitality—The *Bulletin d'Orient*—An Athenian family—The Lame Welsh—The Greek Prime Minister—Public and private institutions—The Parnassos—The Turkish *Entente*—The British Legation—"Come over and help us"

NEXT to the Parthenon, the greatest attraction Athens offers to the traveller is the Hotel *Grande-Bretagne*, and I had been looking forward to taking up my quarters there once more. As it turned out, my friends had made other plans for me, but I took the first opportunity to go round and lunch at my old home at the time of the war.

The *Grande-Bretagne* is the social hearth of Athens, and the class who in other capitals would be found dining at their clubs make it their headquarters. Thus there is a special table for the diplomatic corps. Mr. Lampsas, the proprietor, is a host of the good old school, of whom many anecdotes are told. He used to be rather strict in enforcing punctuality at his table d'hôte, and on one occasion an Italian attaché presumed to come half an hour late. Mr. Lampsas was very sorry, but there was no dinner for him at the *Grande-Bretagne* that night. The Italian appealed to his colleagues to declare a boycott; but, though the Concert of Europe may have terrors for other autocrats, it has none for the sultan of the *Grande-Bretagne*. The unfortunate diplomatists were allowed to wander

miserably round Athens for a season, and then they were wise enough to see the error of their ways, and peace was restored. At another time a Serene Duke who had spent some time under Mr. Lampsa's roof had the bad taste to criticise the bill. Mr. Lampsa promptly tore it up, and declined to receive his Serene Highness again. He has similarly banished the correspondent of *The Times*, for reasons which will be easily apparent to any one who studies the trickle of acid telegrams, usually dated from Sofia, which appear under the heading "Macedonia" in that great organ.

I must be permitted to describe my own very different treatment. On reaching the hotel, I found in the manager, Mr. Karameros, an old comrade to whose kindness I was greatly indebted during the campaign of Epirus in 1897. From that moment it became useless for me to ask for a bill. When I was leaving for Constantinople, Mr. Lampsa honoured me by a most cordial invitation to use the *Grande-Bretagne* as my private house whenever I found myself in Athens in the future, and when I availed myself of his generous hospitality on my way back, I found it extended even to my visitors.

I have ventured to record this instance of a splendid generosity which is characteristic of the Greek private citizen. During the war I spent a fortnight in the house of a merchant of Arta, Mr. Spiridione Ghinos. He had been nearly ruined by the war, and his family and servants had been sent to a place of safety, but he procured me the best of everything that was procurable, and waited on me himself. On leaving I pressed him to accept a banknote. He refused it without hesitation, telling me, through an interpreter, that he wished to be "the brother of my heart." I owe an expression of gratitude to many Greeks for similar hospitality during the present journey; as well as to the Greek doctors, whom my uncertain health obliged me to call in more than once, and who in no case would accept any fee.



Such are the Greeks as I have found them. Other writers on the nation have remarked the same trait, one going so far as to say that he was able to tell whether he was in a Greek or Bulgarian village by the simple test of whether he was or was not allowed to pay for his entertainment. The patriotism that takes such a form ennobles a people. At the time of the war, the very boatmen in the Piræus harbour refused to take money for landing the foreign volunteers; and more than one British Tommy was literally overpowered by the hospitality of the street cafés.

It is possible, indeed I think it probable, that this generosity is extended with especial heartiness to Englishmen, as well as to Frenchmen—I find it difficult to decide which of the two great Liberal Powers stands highest in the affections of the Greeks. Although our attitude towards Hellas has not always been that of a friend, especially in recent years, this attachment has been unshaken. During the Boer War, when nations for whom we had done much more were openly sympathising with our foes, the Greeks made our cause their own, and when the tide at last turned in our favour the enthusiasm of the students broke out in a demonstration in the streets of Athens. The friend who told me of this added the explanation, "We thought that England was in the wrong, but we felt that any weakening of her power and prestige would be a blow to the cause of freedom and justice all over the world."

The Greeks did more than demonstrate merely. The illustration opposite shows a "Greek band" wearing the British uniform, and formed by the Greek residents in Cape Town during the crisis of the war. I may mention that it is a brother of one of these officers to whose assistance the present report owes more than to any other one individual, though he has requested me not to single him out for thanks. I found it hard to believe that Englishmen would let that uniform count for nothing when they came to



"A GREEK BAND."



consider the case of the other Greek bands who were on their trial at the bar of opinion.

For the Greeks, England is the country of Byron and Gladstone, whose statues occupy the finest sites in the city of Athens. Hence it is that they so often find themselves disappointed in their hopes. They forget that Byron was driven out by his fellow-countrymen, and that one-half of them would have liked to drive out Gladstone as well. They forget that if Britain gives birth to Byrons, she also gives birth to Elgins; and as a rule the Byrons are in exile, and the Elgins are in office.

One of the first persons whose acquaintance I made in Athens was Professor Andréadès, who edited the *Bulletin d'Orient*, issued by the Greek Government to inform the European press and public on Macedonian affairs. A similar sheet, called the *Courrier de Sofia*, was being issued by the Bulgarians, and probably one neutralised the other. I found the British consuls in Turkey, to whom the rival publications were regularly sent, disposed to regard them in much the same light as the *Eatonswill Gazette* and *Independent*. I have already commented on the policy of approaching Fleet Street on these lines, and I am bound to add that I think it impossible to produce a paper that will be equally useful in Rumelia and in the meridian of Greenwich. It may cheer the Greek community of Serres or Melenikon to be told that the English press is coming over to the side of Greece, but when the instance given in support of that statement is *The Broadstairs Echo*, one feels that the British consuls are not likely to be impressed in the right way.<sup>1</sup>

I found a kind and helpful cicerone in Lieutenant Constantine Melas, a naval officer who acted as aide-de-camp to Prince George while His Royal Highness

<sup>1</sup> It would be unfair to judge Professor Andréadès by the contents of the *Bulletin d'Orient*. He has presented the Greek case for English readers in an able and convincing article in *The Contemporary Review* for September 1905.

was High Commissioner in Crete. It was a brother of this gentleman who led the first Greek band across the frontier in 1904, and whose name has now taken a permanent place among the heroes of Hellenism. In Macedonia I was often to hear the song which commemorates his fate. In Athens I met his widow and orphan son. I met them in the house of Mrs. Melas's father, Mr. Stephen Dragoumis, who is the leader of an opposition party in the Chamber, influential rather by intellect than by numbers. His household is patriarchal. It is presided over by his mother, a fascinating old lady of eighty, whose life is an epitome of the history of Greece. She described to me her landing at the Piræus as a child, when the site of the thriving seaport was marked only by a few wooden huts; and she was carried ashore in the boatman's arms, and traversed the four miles to Athens on the back of a camel. She remembered the rejoicings in Athens on the accession of Queen Victoria, the coming of King Otho and Queen Amelia, and all the struggles that have gone to the making of Greece.

It was strange to listen to such an account from living lips of that little group of refugees gathering among ruins to lay the foundations of a kingdom; and then to pass out of doors and see the broad roads, the well-paved streets, the stately squares, and, above all, that exquisite group of buildings formed by the University, the Academy, and the Library, which I have seen nothing to match in any city of Europe, unless it be the historic Town Place of Brussels.

Mr. Dragoumis told me the story of his son-in-law's departure.

"He had been thinking about it for a long time. At last he came to me one night, and said, 'I must go. I do not expect to come back alive, but I cannot rest here while those poor people are being tortured and killed. I must go and defend them.'"

In the end Paul Melas was entrapped and killed in a

cottage where he was resting for the night. His death was the work of Turkish soldiers, who, of course, were doing no more than their duty ; but the family believe that his hiding-place was pointed out to them by a woman, despatched by Bulgarians in the village. I desire to blame neither him nor them. The real authors of all the grim deeds done in Rumelia between Christians are those who first turned Christian weapons against Christian breasts.

Madame Melas afterwards visited the spot to ascertain the details of her husband's fate, and to give his remains an honourable grave. She found the cottage, and at first the old woman who dwelt there refused to speak. But at last she said, with tears, "He was so good, so thoughtful. He paid for everything, even down to the bit of cheese."

The peasant could think of no higher praise. There can be little doubt that much of the success of the Greek bands over the Bulgarians has been due to the fact that the *'Antartes* pay for what they consume, while the *Comitadjis* live on the country, and ruthlessly tax their friends as well as their enemies.

Mr. Dragoumis has given special attention to the subject of the Koutzo-Vlachs, that mysterious little people which the Rumanian Government has been trying to claim as a branch of its own nation. Through his liberality the first dictionary of their language, or dialect, is now in course of publication, and a specimen-page shows that the Vlach stands about half-way between Rumanian and Romaic, or Latin and Greek. It may be a blend of the two ; it may even be a dialect of antiquity, spoken by a border people, which has preserved its separate existence while the dialects on either side of it were being absorbed by the classical Greek and the classical Latin. I have no real confidence in the dictionaries which are prepared by scholars, with their minds under the sway of the Alexandrian grammarians, of peasant dialects which vary from village to village and

*Specimen Page of Koutzo-Vlach Dictionary (in the press)*  
*The English meanings are added*

**ανγκανάρε — ανγκλιτάτ<sup>ου</sup>**

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ἡ χειρονομίας). Ἐκ τοῦ δημ. λατ. ganno=χλευάζω, ἀπατῶ (gannator=χλευαστής) ἱταλ. ingannare, πορτ. enganar, ισπ. enganar, ρουμ. ingân, ἀρχ. γαλ. enganner, προβ. enganar ἰδ. Pusc. καὶ Dens. 191.

To deceive.

**ανγκανάρε**, ἀπθ. οὐσ. τοῦ ἀν. ρ., -νάρ<sup>ι</sup>, πληθ. (angânáre, -nâr<sup>i</sup>)=ἡ πρόσκλησις τοῦ ζῴου διὰ δελεασμοῦ, ρ. chiamare, λ.

To lure

**ανγκανάτ<sup>ου</sup>**, -τᾶ -τς, -τε καθ. μετ. τοῦ ἀν. ρ. (angânát<sup>u</sup>, -tă, -ts, -tə)=προσκεκλημένος διὰ τοῦ δέλητος, φωνῆς ἡ χειρονομίας (ἐπὶ ζῴων) ρουμ. chiamat, λατ.

A lure.

**ανγκάρσέσκου**, -σί<sup>ι</sup>, -σιτᾶ, -σιρε ρ. (angârsésku, si<sup>i</sup>, -sită ·sire)=ὀγκῶμαι, κραυγάζω (ἐπὶ τοῦ θνους) κοιν. γκαρύζω καὶ ἀγκαρύζω, ἀορ. ἀγκάρσα, ἐξ οὗ τὸ προκ. ρ. Ρουμ. sbier, λ.

To bray.

**ανγκάρσίρε**, ἀπθ. οὐσ. τοῦ ἀν. -σίρ<sup>ι</sup> πληθ. (angârsîre, -sir<sup>i</sup>)=ὀγκηθμός, κοιν. γκάρυσμα, ρουμ. sbierare, λατ.

Bray.

**ανγκάτάν<sup>ου</sup>**, ἐπὶ ρ. (angâtân<sup>u</sup>)=πρόφυλακτικῶς, εὐλαδῶς, προσεκτικῶς· οἶον· «τι ἀμ<sup>ου</sup> ανγκάτάν<sup>ου</sup>»=σε προφυλάττω. Ἀγνώστου μοι καταγωγῆς.

To protect.

**ανγκίδα**, οὐσ. θηλ., ανγκιτζ πληθ. (angîdă, ·dz)=σκινδαλμός, κοιν. ἀγκίδα (ἀκίς -ίδος) ρουμ. askie, tsandără, σλαβ.

Splinter.

**ανγκινάρε**, οὐσ. θηλ., ανγκινάρ<sup>ι</sup> πληθ. (anginără, nâr<sup>i</sup>)=κινάρα κοιν. ἀγκινάρα, ρουμ. anghinară, ἑλλ.

Artichoke

**ανγκίστρον**, οὐσ. οὐδ. -στρι πληθ. (angîstru-strî)=ἄγκιστρον, κοιν. ἀγκίστρι, ρουμ. unditsă, σλαβ.

Fish-hook.

**ανγκλίτ<sup>ου</sup>** καὶ **νγκλίτ<sup>ου</sup>**, ανγκλιτά<sup>ι</sup>, -ατᾶ, -αρε ρ. (anglî-t<sup>u</sup>, -tai, -tată, -tare)=καταπίνω. Ἐκ τοῦ λατ. inglutitio, ire=καταπίνω ἱτ. inghiottire, ἀρχ. ισπ. englutir, πορτ. engulir, γαλ. engloutin, ρουμ. inghits. Καὶ ανγκλιτῶ<sup>ου</sup> καὶ νγκλιτῶ<sup>ου</sup>.

To swallow.

**ανγκλιτάρε**, καὶ **ανγκλιτσάρε**, ἀπθ. οὐσ. τοῦ ἀν ρ. -τᾶρ<sup>ι</sup> καὶ τᾶρ<sup>ι</sup> πληθ. (anglitsăre, -tsăr<sup>i</sup>)=κατάποσις· ρουμ. inghi-tsire, λατ

Swallowing.

**ανγκλιτάτ<sup>ου</sup>**, -τᾶ, -τς, -τε καὶ **ανγκλιτσάτ<sup>ου</sup>**, καὶ **νγκλι-**

from house to house, as is the case with Welsh, and even with rural English.

The name Vlach, or Wallach, is probably the same as Welsh, meaning stranger or foreigner.<sup>1</sup> Koutzo is said to mean Lame, an explanation which does not satisfy me. I should be disposed to compare this name with that of the historical *Gepidæ*, the Laggards described by Gibbon, and to believe that it originally indicated no more than that these clans were the latest to arrive of their nation, in some forgotten migration, or that they were left behind.

The Lame Welsh lead a life which may help to account for their name, as well as for the preservation of their dialect. They are shepherds and pedlars, passing the summer on the alps of the Pindus, and descending in winter to their homes in Macedonia and Thessaly. They are thus kept from mingling with the settled population which cultivates the soil.

Whatever be the motives of the Rumanian Government for desiring to proselytise the Lame Welsh, the methods it has pursued are in honourable contrast to those of Sofia, and it is deeply to be regretted that the Greeks should have resented them in the way they have. The Rumanians have built schools; here and there they have obtained the right to use a church; most of their schools are practically benevolent institutions in which the children are taken off their parents' hands and brought up at the Rumanian expense; and in other cases it is alleged that parents are bribed to send their children to the Rumanian school.

All that is no more than is done by every English and American missionary society, often with much less excuse. And what harm has this propaganda done to Hellas? Half the public buildings in Athens have been presented to it by Lame Welshmen, residing in all parts of the Levant. The Rumanian

<sup>1</sup> One authority identifies it with *villager*. But all these words have the same root if we go deep enough.



inspector of schools, Lecanta, in a report to his Government, described the work of these proselytising schools as a total failure. I myself found in the Vlach village of Megarevo, containing five thousand inhabitants, a Rumanian school which had been shut up for want of pupils. This foreign propaganda has only had the effect of stimulating the national feeling. In all Rumelia we shall find no such enthusiastic Hellenes as the Lame Welsh.

I use the word Hellene not as a racial, nor even as a national designation. I use it in the classical sense of the word Hellenist, or Hellenising. I do not believe in the existence in our days of a pure Greek population; perhaps there never was such a population. Herodotus describes the inhabitants of Attica itself as Pelasgians. No man can any longer prove a Greek descent, as the ancient kings of Macedon proved theirs before they were admitted to take part in the Olympic Games. A Hellene is he who wishes to be thought a Greek, as Philip wished, and Alexander wished, and half the inhabitants of their vanished kingdom wish to-day. For the Slave it is promotion to become a Greek, as it is promotion for the Hindu to become a Briton. The Hellene is he who deserves to be reckoned a Hellene, for the true Hellene is the pioneer of civilisation and the child of Light.

Among the acquaintances I renewed during my stay were their Excellencies Mr. Levidis, President of the Chamber, and Mr. Skouzès, Foreign Minister.

Mr. Levidis carried me to see the Prime Minister, Mr. Theotokis, a statesman who would have risen to eminence in any country in which he had been born. The Greeks liken him to Lord Rosebery, but he has been more successful in retaining the allegiance of his followers. An example of his skill in that direction came under my own observation. And he has used his power well. He has put down many abuses with which his predecessors were unable

to grapple. He has taken the War Office as his own department, in order to put a stop to favouritism in the army, and to sustain the authority of the Prince-Heir as Commander-in-Chief.

Of the Heir, as the Greeks call him, I heard nothing that was not encouraging. He has thrown himself heart and soul into the work of reorganising the army and retrieving the past. He has surrounded himself with the best officers, and his conduct of the last manœuvres won him the praise and confidence of old soldiers who had hitherto held aloof. The Greeks love their Heir, and, what is better, they believe that he loves them.

I had two conversations with the Prime Minister, one on the way out and another on my return. On the first occasion our talk turned chiefly on the state of public opinion in England, and the best means of enlightening it, and I offered some suggestions which have since been acted on. Mr. Theotokis expressed the belief that there was no possibility of any agreement between Greece and Bulgaria on the Macedonian question. The Bulgarians were determined to come down to the sea, and the Greeks would never consent to have their way barred to Constantinople.

"We should have to swim for it," were the Prime Minister's words.

It may clear away much misunderstanding to explain here that neither Mr. Theotokis nor any other Greek looks forward to the possession of Constantinople as a possible event under present conditions. What the Greeks really desire is that they shall not be deprived of hope, and that their nationality shall not be oppressed. They have welcomed the prospect of a constitutional Turkey, and are prepared to work cordially with the Young Turks, provided that their old-time rights are respected. Their peculiar hostility to the Bulgars is due to the fact that the Comitadjis aim at extinguishing the Hellenism of the whole

Macedonian population. "Under the Turks, we can live on and hope for the future. Under the Bulgars, we should be crushed out of existence." Such was the language addressed to me over and over again.

On the second occasion Mr. Theotokis gave me his views on the proposal put forward by Sir Edward Grey for the appointment of a Governor-General of Macedonia, responsible to the Powers. The Greek statesman objected to this step as tending to support the Bulgarian contention that the three vilayets form a unity like Crete. It would be a triumph for the Comitadjis, and would pave the way towards a Bulgarian annexation of the whole country. As an alternative, he advocated the appointment of three Governors, one for each vilayet. He expressed himself as favourable to the suggestion that the northern vilayet should be placed under a Bulgarian, the southern under a Greek, and the central one under a Moslem, in this way marking out the distinctive spheres of influence, and preparing the ground for an equitable partition hereafter.

Mr. Skouzès, on whom I called at the Foreign Office, is a statesman of the school of Metternich rather than Bismarck, and I found him more inclined to talk about Nigeria than Macedonia. We got on to the subject of the war of 1897, and I said that in my opinion the harsh judgment of the Greek troops formed by Europe was largely due to the breakdown of the telegraphic service at Arta. The operator sent up there to forward the press messages knew very little English, a telegram which I sent to *The Manchester Guardian* at my own expense to announce the taking of Philippiada arrived in an illegible condition, and long despatches from the regular correspondents of other journals were thrust into a pigeon-hole, and never sent at all. The consequence was that, while the European press was ringing with highly coloured descriptions of panics and retreats in Thessaly, the Greek victories in Epirus

went unrecorded, and are unknown to the general public at this hour.

Mr. Skouzès replied that I ought to have wired to him to send up a better man. I confess it had not occurred to me that such an interference on my part came within my duty, or my right. But I am convinced that Mr. Skouzès' retort was perfectly sincere. Whatever be the faults of the Greek Government, it is distinguished by an openness of mind, and a willingness to accept information and advice, no matter from what quarter, which contrast very favourably with the spirit of some more important bureaucracies.

It must be admitted, nevertheless, that neither the intelligence nor the patriotism of the nation is adequately manifested in the administration of its public affairs. Greece has produced eminent statesmen, but not eminent statescraft. Her politicians are high-minded—it has been remarked that in Greece men enter political life rich and leave it poor, while in Bulgaria the politicians begin poor and end rich. And yet the national concerns of Bulgaria are better managed than those of Greece. The really heroic devotion which marks the individual Greek seems to be lost as soon as it is a question of concerted action. The wealthy Greek colonies abroad, in cities like London and Marseilles and Odessa, have endowed Hellas with splendid charities and public buildings, but they appear wanting in that spirit which causes the Irish of America and Australia to be the firmest supports of the Home Rule cause. The zeal of the Macedonian peasant and the Athenian shopkeeper is amazing, but there appears to be some depressing influence which prevents this enthusiasm manifesting itself in the ranks above. Hellenism resembles those trees in the myth of Laodamia which withered when they reached a certain height.

This unfortunate state of things may be attributed in part to the extremely harsh judgment of the Greeks

which has prevailed in Europe since the time of the Crusades, and which originated, there can be no doubt, in the religious dissensions between the Orthodox Church and the Papacy. The history of Gibbon is uniformly biassed against the Byzantines. In France and England this prejudice has been reinforced by political considerations; Greece has been snubbed in the character of a danger to the integrity of Turkey. Philhellenism has been confined to a small number of enthusiasts; even Palmerston, the patron of Italian freedom, had no tolerance for Hellenism on that account. On the other hand, whenever the Greeks have shown any disposition to unite with the Turks, the full flood of Liberal sentiment has been turned against them. They have been in the position of the old man in the fable who could not satisfy the passers-by whether he rode on the ass himself, or let his boy ride, or whether both rode, or both carried the ass.

It would be better for the Greeks, perhaps, if they paid less heed to the criticism of Europe, and steered their own course independently. The only thing Europe really respects is success. At the same time they would be wrong not to exert themselves to the utmost to dissipate the false impressions which have been formed in the West, and to meet that campaign of misrepresentation which has been so important a branch of the Bulgarian propaganda in recent years.

To pass from the public to the private institutions of Athens is like the change from a stagnant canal to a rushing river. The city is covered with splendid educational monuments erected by private individuals. The King has given it a theatre. The charities are on a level with those of London. I found an old comrade, Dr. Makkas, in charge of a children's hospital which enjoys the close personal interest of Princess Sophia, and which represents the last word of hospital science. I was shown over an excellent normal school engaged in training many girls from

Macedonia for the schools of that country. It is the voluntary work of a committee of ladies. Their president, Mrs. Lascaridés, who graciously conducted me over the premises, is celebrated for her remarkable likeness to the late Queen Victoria.

The charity which interested me most of all is the evening school conducted for the little bootblacks. The *loustro* is the most characteristic figure of Athens, the city of dust and marble. To have speckless boots seems to be the unattainable ambition of every true Athenian. I formed the theory that when two Greek friends meet in the street, one does not say to the other, "What will you drink?"—he calls two loustros and the friends sit down side by side and have their boots blacked. I tested the theory by inviting my Greek friends to partake of this pleasure, and I found the invitation taken as quite a thing of course. It is the national pastime, almost the national vice.

The boys who engage in this trade come into the city from all parts of Greece, from Patras and Sparta and the Cyclades. Often they come as young as eight or ten—it is quite usual for a mite of eight to enter domestic service—and they live together in little bands of five or six, who share the same room, and work the same part of the city. In addition to their main trade they sell papers and run errands. Their honesty is proverbial, and their thrift not less so. Some of them have saved up as much as £500 by the time they are of age, and are able to start in business. It comes as a shock to Western prejudices to find such young boys in the street, or in service, instead of in the school-room. But Greece is a poor country. And perhaps this whole question of education is one on which our ideas are destined to undergo a considerable change in the near future.

In the meantime an evening school has been established for the benefit of these lads, and I am proud to say it has been established by the Parnassos Philological Society, which has honoured me with its

diploma. I think it is touching, and it is most Hellenic, to find a learned body going outside the field of what may be called its legitimate work to play the part of guardian and teacher to these little waifs. In one and the same building are the lecture-halls in which the latest results of scientific and literary research are made public, and the class-rooms in which the street-boy is taught to read and write. The average number in attendance is between six and seven hundred, and it is the boast of the managers that no Parnassos boy has ever gone to prison. They hand over their savings at the end of each week to the Society, which places them at interest in a bank. The boys are required to present themselves in a clean and tidy state, and I saw several of them washing themselves vigorously at the taps provided for the purpose. The discipline seemed to be perfect, and I could not help contrasting the behaviour of these Greek lads with that of the spoiled children of another country, at a centre for Recreative Evening Classes of which I once had charge.

Athens is not merely the capital of the Greek kingdom—it is the capital of the Hellenes; and it is this fact which renders so difficult the relations between the Greek and Turkish Governments. A race in which the political instinct and the sense of national unity are both strongly developed is living, one half on its own free territory, and the other half across the border under the rule of an alien and detested Government. Such a situation has not offered the elements of peace or good understanding. The Greeks of Turkey have been in a chronic state of sedition, and their free brethren have been bound to foster their aspirations towards union with the kingdom. The Turks, on the other hand, have come to regard sedition as the natural attitude of their Christian subjects, and as long as it did not break out in open revolt they took little notice of it. At the same time

they have been prevented from dealing effectively with their enemies, either within or without the empire, by their own practical vassalage to the Six Powers. A Turkish statesman remarked that it would be no advantage to Turkey to invade Bulgaria, in order to put an end to the Folk War. "We got the better of Greece in 1897, and as a result we lost Crete. If we defeat Bulgaria, we may find ourselves deprived of Macedonia." The Greeks have been made to feel that their fortunes depend, not on their own efforts, but on the goodwill of the protecting Powers. The Powers have given them Thessaly, England has given them the Ionian Islands, and now Crete hangs by a single hair. Macedonia has long been regarded as the next instalment. When a British Princess visited Athens a few years ago, the belief at once possessed the populace that she was to marry one of the Greek princes, and that "Macedonia would be her dowry." It was hoped, apparently, that England would conquer that country from the Turks, to say nothing of the other five Powers, and hand it over to Greece as a wedding present.

Expectations like these lie at the root of the recent troubles. European diplomacy first held out hopes of a delimitation of the Macedonian vilayets on a basis of nationality, and, having thus encouraged the mutual strife of Greeks and Bulgars, it has since declared that it will ignore the results of armed action. Unfortunately, no one believes the declarations of European diplomacy, least of all the diplomatists themselves, and if either the Greeks or the Bulgars had retired from the field they might easily have found themselves left out in the cold later on. The only way in which diplomacy could repair the mischief it has wrought would be by proceeding to a delimitation forthwith, and thereby depriving the contending parties of any excuse for continuing the war.

Failing some such action on the part of the Powers, it was impressed upon me while I was in Athens that



the most practical policy for the Greeks to pursue at that juncture would be one of co-operation with the Turks, for the purpose of putting down the Comitadjis, and restoring peace.

Unfortunately that is just what "Europe" did not approve.

"Our Government took that view," my friends explained. "We were on the right path, but Europe cried shame on us for entering into an alliance with the Turks, and we had to abandon it."

It is difficult to condemn strongly enough the attitude of Europe, when it would neither come to the rescue of these wretched Macedonians nor permit the Greek bands to do so, nor tolerate any move on their part to unite with the Turks for the sake of protection and peace. It is no longer the Turks who must be considered as the cause of these evils; the responsibility rests with the Christian Powers.

My Greek friends spoke truly. That brief-lived attempt to enter into relations with the Turks has been cast in their teeth by all the Comitadji writers as though it were a crime more heinous than any atrocity alleged against the Greek bands. The Archbishop of Castoria—that scapegoat of Hellenism—who is, of course, a subject of the Sultan's, and a public officer of the State, was photographed on one occasion in a group with the governor of the town and the military commandant. That photograph has gone the round of Europe and America. It is a proof positive—a blot that nothing can efface. I do not make out from the Comitadji books whether being photographed in company with men of another creed is a graver or lighter offence than paying fifty pieces of gold for a severed head; but I think the photograph has been more insisted on.

Alas! What will the Comitadji press think or say when I affirm that I have seen with my own eyes a Bulgarian Archbishop, his Eminence of Monastir, seated side by side with the Turkish Governor-

General at a Bulgarian charitable concert; and have witnessed a bouquet and an address of welcome presented to his Excellency in the Archbishop's presence, and apparently with his foreknowledge and consent!

One of my Greek friends thought it necessary to assure me that his sentiments towards the Turks were such as "Europe" would approve.

"Of course we hate the Turks; we shall always hate them; it is in our blood," he protested.

I thought it was a singular tribute to the influence of English Liberalism that an officer and a gentleman, a Christian and a Hellene, should lay claim to the feelings of a pagan savage in order to preserve its good opinion.

Whatever be the feelings of the present generation, and however strange such an alliance would have seemed to the last, the steady pressure of circumstances is driving Greeks and Turks together. To be sincere and lasting, an alliance between them may have to be preceded by the enfranchisement of such provinces of Turkey as are unquestionably Greek. But there will still remain a scattered population of Hellenes, like that found in Egypt, and till recently in Bulgaria, not strong enough to stand alone; and in its interest a healing of the ancient feud is desirable.

On this subject I confess that I found some of the statesmen whom I met in Athens rather impracticable. They almost spoke as if it were the mission of Hellas to drive the Turk, not merely out of Europe, but out of existence. They failed to indicate any boundaries which would satisfy Hellenist claims. I think it was their secret idea that, even when the Greeks found themselves in a minority, the Powers ought to invest them with the government, in right of their moral and intellectual superiority to the races around them. It is to be feared that the only superiority that counts in these matters is superiority in arms. Even if the Powers were much more disinterested, and much

more friendly to Greece than they have yet shown themselves to be, they are hardly likely to place them in possession of Constantinople by force, and maintain a garrison there as well, to keep out covetous neighbours.

It is one thing to see the best course, however, and another thing to have the power to take it. In addition to the bigotry of Europe, the statesmen of Greece have also to consider the more excusable feeling of their clients in Macedonia. To these Rumelian peasants the words Hellene and Christian have for ages signified the same thing. The Folk War is teaching them the difference, but they are still a very long way from looking upon the Moslem as a possible friend and brother.

I think it more profitable to point out these elements in the problem than to offer any cut-and-dried solution. The Gordian knot will be cut by the sword at last.

Before leaving for Constantinople I saw Sir Francis Elliot, our distinguished representative in Athens. His Excellency was most kind in having my passport put in order, and showed a very friendly interest in my mission. Indeed, I was impressed by the general disposition on the part of the higher members of our diplomatic service to welcome anything in the shape of a reasonable and impartial inquiry into the situation. The official on the spot is sometimes rather distrustful of the unofficial politician, and perhaps the character and conduct of some travelling politicians justify that attitude.

On my return to Athens I met Sir Francis Elliot again, and he asked me what conclusions I had come to. I said that I feared the only way to secure lasting peace would be to redistribute the population in racial areas.

"I put forward that suggestion thirty years ago," said the Minister, with a rather melancholy smile.

Although my presence in Athens was not made

public in any way, it reached the ears of a society composed of Macedonian students of the University of Athens. They requested me to receive a deputation from their body, and their spokesman read me the following address, which is signed by representatives from all parts of Macedonia. It is a sincere and spontaneous appeal for a candid inquiry, and perhaps I may consider it as my best credential to the reader of this Report.

*To ALLEN UPWARD, ESQ.*

ATHENS.

"SIR,

"Before you have the honour of standing Greek students of the National University from all over Macedonia, who, having heard of your presence in Athens and knowing the position you hold in the literary world, as also on the Press of your great and powerful country, have considered it a duty to present ourselves before you and to give you a word of welcome.

"Being deeply grieved at the terrible and unbearable state of things brought about during the last few years in our country Macedonia, which state of things, so far from improving, is continuously getting worse and worse, we have, we repeat, considered it a duty to come and lay this declaration before you, seeing that we let no opportunity go past us without trying to improve the sad condition of our oppressed brothers.

"We are sure that you are well aware of the horrible and almost helpless conditions under which live the Greek populations of Macedonia; blood is flowing in streams, our property is being reduced to smoke and ashes, and our native land presents the bloody and horrifying aspect of a fighting arena, in which men are being hunted and tracked down like wild beasts.

"The sight of this racial strife is truly appalling, but what is really discouraging for us is the appre-

hension that the great and powerful, as also the noblest, nations of Europe are showing such marked and inexcusable apathy and indifference to this misery, and that by their line of action, far from discouraging, they rather rekindle the appetite and the wicked instincts of the people who profess to be waging war throughout Macedonia for the sake of our liberty.

"Much has been said and written in the European Press about the Macedonian Question. Having closely followed up what has been written and published on Macedonia, we are perfectly convinced that the real truth has not yet leaked out, nor has the European public been so far sufficiently and correctly enlightened on the real cause of the strife in our country.

"Coming before you to-day, we young men from all the regions of Macedonia request and beg you to cross over into our country, to visit every part, her towns, her villages, to question the inhabitants, examine their way of living, question them particularly on their sufferings and on their real aspirations, place your finger on their wounds, and proclaim the TRUTH to the civilised world. You will not, we are sure, find there Greek hordes waging war and oppressing innocent villagers; you will simply meet defenders armed in order to protect their families, their lands, their schools, their churches, and themselves against the invaders, who are putting to death innocent beings, and are attempting to overrun the land with fire and sword. In your journey throughout our country you will come across legions of industrial, scientific, and commercial Greeks, as also of Greek agriculturists, peasants, and labourers. Almost everywhere you will find on your way Greek philanthropic and educational establishments and churches, as also Greek antiquities. Wherever you go you will meet before you people with Greek hearts and with Greek ideas.

"We are confident that a strict, careful, and impartial investigation cannot but convince you of the fact that the real aspirations of the majority of the Macedonian people have been for some reason or

other waived aside and purposely overlooked, their most ardent desire being that for GREEK FREEDOM.

"ATHENS,

" 5th—18th November, 1907.

" *The President of*

" *The Society of Macedonian Students,*

" EUMENES OLYMPIADES, from Castoria."

*The Committee*

A. HERACLIOTIS, Monastir.

ALEX. AXIOU, Croussovo.

J. K. DEMETRIADES, Monastir.

KLEITOS GOURAS, Scopia.

GEORGE NICOLAIDES, Melenikon.

PH. GEORGIADES, Ano. Djoumaya.

LUCIEN ANASTASIADES, Serres.

CONST. PETRINOS, Korytza.

ANTIPATROS LAZARIDES, Nevrocop.

CONST. PERDIKAS, Salonica.

NICOLAS SMANOPOULOS, Cavalla.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SIX KINGS OF CONSTANTINOPLE

An International Egypt—Travellers' tales—The Head of the Church—Bulgarian atrocities—Policy of the Comitadjis—An Archbishop on his defence—The confidences of an Ambassador—Paradise Lost

I MADE the voyage to Stamboul in the company of a friend whom I had made on board the *Baron Beck*, Mr. Hadji Lazzaro, American Consul at Salonika. With us was a Secretary of the Greek Legation.

The diplomatist was under a slight temporary cloud. The correspondence of the Archbishop of Drama (a place I was to visit) had been seized by the authorities "upon information received," and it was found to include letters to or from this gentleman of a character which a loyal subject was not strictly justified in sending, nor the representative of a foreign Government in receiving.

In any other country in the world the secretary would have received his passport, with an intimation that his departure must be final. But in Turkey this kind of thing has always been so much a matter of course that the Porte contented itself with stipulating that he should not again act as *chargé d'affaires*.

The incident illustrates the easy-going character of the Sultan's Government, due partly to the national temperament, and partly to that Government's sense of its own weakness. In this and many other respects it is to be feared that if the Young Turks maintain

their success, the Christians of Turkey may find that they have exchanged King Log for King Stork.

The Turkish empire, in the phase in which I found it, resembled an Egypt over which the Six Powers exercised an undeclared suzerainty like that exercised by Great Britain on the Nile. The control of the Ambassadors was less close and regular than that of the British Adviser in Cairo. They were not always unanimous, and they were not supported by an army of occupation. But the Sultan was wise enough to know that the next time a European army entered his dominions it would be to stay, and it was no part of his policy to defy a decision which had the real assent of the Six Suzerains.

It is a commonplace that the fall of the empire has only been delayed by the mutual jealousies of the Powers. Turkey may be compared to a man who has lost the use of his legs, but is kept upright because he is surrounded by six other men, each of whom is trying to push him a different way. It has been the task of the present Sultan to take advantage of this respite to build up the forces of the empire, and prepare it to shake off the Christian yoke. His aim has been like that of the Japanese Emperor, but his difficulties have been infinitely greater. The Mikado found himself at once king and pope, the last of a line of divine ancestors reigning over a brave, united, loyal, and patriotic people. The Sultan was called to the throne by a conspiracy, to find himself at the head of a people unused to regular government, and itself no more than a military caste presiding over subject populations alienated from the Turks and from each other by religion, by race, by language, and by centuries of strife. The figure of Abdul Hamid II. stands out like that of the captain of a beleaguered town, commanding undisciplined troops, with half the inhabitants in a state of sedition, and with the envoys of the beleaguering force lodged inside the walls. Truly a wonderful figure, perhaps the most wonderful



of all that have ever reigned in Constantinople since the foundation of the city.

In spite of the doubtful company I was in I passed through the custom-house with less delay, and a less rigid scrutiny of my belongings, than I have had to submit to in many European countries. A small tip may have passed between my friend and the man who assisted to strap up our trunks again, but the statement that a dollar is openly demanded of the traveller entering Constantinople by the revenue officers is not justified by my experience. Such statements swarm in the pages of every book written about the Turkish empire. They are generally worded so as to be incapable of either proof or disproof. In some cases they are no more than the grumbles which all travellers are tempted to indulge in, in all foreign countries. In others they evidently spring from a preconceived notion that Turkey is judged, condemned, and only awaiting the execution of the sentence of Europe. It is always popular to shout with the largest mob. It is always easier to pander to an established prejudice than to correct it. When such thoughtless slanders are flung out against a country like Russia or America they do little harm, because those Powers are able to protect themselves. When they are uttered against a country that lies, as it were, under the sword of Damocles, they have serious consequences. They amount to another nail driven into the coffin, another straw added on to the camel's back. It is for that reason that I have here and there felt it my duty to notice statements which I should have otherwise passed over as vulgar *obiter dicta*.

It is worthy of remark that the most muddy and disagreeable quarters of Constantinople are European Pera and Galata—Pera, the home of the Embassies, and Galata, the seat of the foreign merchant. There is a municipality of Pera, and there is enough wealth in its shops to provide a decent pavement for the main street. If the Embassies and the Legations and the

Consulates would exert themselves to give a friendly lead to the Turkish authorities in the matter of street cleaning and paving, I should have more confidence, and possibly the Turks would have more confidence, in their sincerity on the subject of more ambitious reforms.

It is also noteworthy that the only case of serious blackmail I encountered in the whole of Turkey was in a European hotel, owned by a foreign company. I stayed in this hotel for a week, and the backsheesh came to one half of the bill. After satisfying nine different attendants, I was intercepted at the door by a tenth, who practically barred my passage, and, after getting into my carriage, an eleventh hand was thrust into my face to demand a fee for the "bagagiste." As a result, the biggest hotel in a great capital stands nearly empty during a great part of the year. The Turkish Government has been defrauded into giving a kilometric guarantee to the railway, in consequence of which it pays the company to have as little traffic as possible. I do not know whether a similar provision is afforded to the shareholders in the Pera Palace Hotel.

I had arrived with an introduction to the Greek Minister, Mr. Gryparis, to whom, and to Madame Gryparis, I am indebted for very great kindness and hospitality, both on this occasion and on my return. Mr. Gryparis enjoys the personal esteem of the Turkish authorities themselves. He shook his head when I mentioned, on a later occasion, that a very high functionary had praised him in my presence.

"I wish they would show less courtesy towards me, and more consideration towards my country," he responded.

A day or two after my arrival I drove over to the Phanar, accompanied by the dragoman of the Greek legation, to visit the Œcumenical Patriarch.

It is not my object, in this Report, to describe buildings and scenery, but men ; and yet perhaps the

men cannot be understood without some knowledge of their surroundings.

The Phanar is the ancient Greek quarter of Stamboul, a city in which the Greeks now form perhaps a third of the inhabitants. It lies up the Golden Horn, a network of streets, clean-looking but curiously quiet and deserted, with an air of mild decay. I could have fancied myself in the clerical quarter of some faded French city like Angoulême. The Phanariot Greeks are a class apart. In past days they formed an aristocracy within the pale of democratic Islam, and filled the highest posts in the Sultan's service. But it has always happened, in the history of Turkey, that as soon as the ruling race has taken any class of its subjects into favour it has been rewarded by rebellion. Twenty years ago the Armenians were practically governing the empire. They did everything in Constantinople. The result was that impossible outbreak in which a Christian subject minority sought to triumph over an armed majority of Moslems. Similarly the bestowal of berats on the Bulgarian Archbishops became the signal for the attempted conquest of Rumelia by the Bulgars from a majority composed of Turks and Greeks.

The Phanariot princes proclaimed the War of Independence, contemplating the restoration of the Byzantine empire, an empire which had been ravaged and reduced by Servian and Bulgarian hordes before ever the Turks arrived upon the scene to pick up the fragments. During the long domination of Islam the Christian races seemed to have hushed up their ancient feuds. With the first prospect of independence they sprung up into fresh life. That is the key to the Macedonian Question, and without it any study of the problem is a waste of time.

The Turks struck at the head. They seized the Patriarch Gregory in the heart of the Phanar, and hanged him before his own gate. The gate still stands there. It has never been opened since. I saw

it as we passed into the palace by another entrance. It remains there closed, the silent memorial of a feud which is not closed.

The Patriarch of Constantinople enjoys the style of Œcumenical, to mark his primacy over the Orthodox Patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem. His authority in matters of doctrine and ritual extends over the whole of the Turkish and Russian empires, over Rumania, Servia, and Greece. But he is a constitutional ruler. He excommunicated the Bulgarian Exarch in a council attended by the other three Patriarchs, and the Patriarch of Jerusalem gave a dissenting vote.

His ecclesiastical jurisdiction is strictly confined to the Turkish empire, and he exercises it with the concurrence of a Synod composed of twelve metropolitans, partly taken in rotation, and partly chosen by himself, who hold their seats for two years, and of a Mixed Council containing laymen which is concerned with questions of finance. By virtue of these arrangements the Patriarch wields a power less absolute than the Pope's, though far exceeding that of any Protestant authority—a power, indeed, which seems to be closely assimilated to that attributed to the apostles in the New Testament.

In Greece itself the Œcumenical Patriarch has no more authority than the Archbishop of Canterbury has in the United States. Nevertheless his portrait may be seen everywhere alongside of those of the King and Queen. He is the immediate successor of the apostles. He is prayed for by name in the liturgy of every Orthodox Church. He is the link which, like the Greek language of the Gospels, binds the Orthodox communion to the primitive Christian Church with a closeness which a Latin Catholic cannot realise, and a Protestant does not pretend to feel.

The wiser Protestant missionaries in the Levant have ceased to try to proselytise the Greeks. They

are content to educate them, to open their minds, and to trust to the work of reformation from within. The Latins know that their task is a hopeless one. In the palmy days of the Papacy, when it could call crusading armies to its aid, it never succeeded in overcoming the obstinate aversion of the Greeks. Rome entertains hopes of England and of France, for they are her spiritual colonies. But Rome herself was evangelised from the East. The daughter cannot teach the mother.

The Bulgarians, who take their creed more lightly than any other people in this part of the world, have cheerfully braved the excommunication of the Patriarch in order to escape from his control. At one time they thought of entering the Roman communion in order to obtain the political support of Napoleon III., but that would have cost them the sympathy of Russia. Nevertheless, during my present journey I saw reason to suspect that the extraordinary manner in which their atrocities have been condoned, while those of the Greeks have been objugated, by "Europe," is at least partly due to their quarrel with the Eastern Church.

The present Patriarch, Joachim III., is without exception the most imposing personality I have ever met. His massive frame, in its simple black robe, is surmounted by a noble head, with the traditional flowing beard which marks the Eastern clergy. Even the slight limp with which he moved across the room to meet me had the air of a deliberate stateliness.

He received me without the slightest pretension, shaking hands like an ordinary gentleman, and offering me a chair. The coffee and sweetmeats usual on such occasions were duly served, and our conversation was interpreted by my companion.

I explained the object with which I was visiting the country, and his Holiness naturally expressed

himself as grateful. He, like every one else, was unable to understand the dead-set made at the Greeks as compared with their enemies. He informed me that he had written to the Archbishop of Canterbury soliciting his sympathy, but had received a cold and evasive reply. A second letter from the head of the Eastern Churches had received no answer.

It was a strange situation. The man who stands nearest to the apostles, for whom Peter, James, and John are not names out of a story-book, but venerated predecessors whose functions have descended to himself, this man was complaining of the lack of Christian courtesy shown to him by a Protestant whose title to call himself Bishop is not proven. The English Primate's coldness is probably attributable to the violent slanders with which the Greek hierarchy has been assailed in the pro-Bulgarian Press. The prelates of Macedonia have been held responsible for the acts of reprisal committed by the Greek bands. But there is another side to the question. Those prelates are the natural and lawful protectors of their flocks, and for years past they have had to look on while the members of their flocks were being subjected to unspeakable outrages for no other crime than that of adhering to the Church of their ancestors.

I have before me a book presented to me by Joachim III., in which are contained the official reports received by the Patriarchate from its metropolitans during the years 1903-6. There is no form of horrid outrage, from violation to cannibalism, which does not find a place in these appalling records. The Archbishop of Salonika, in August 1904, reports a filthy atrocity just committed in a village two hours from the city, Gradomporia. A band of fifty Bulgars seized the village, and a party proceeded to break into the house of an old man named Traicos Stergius, and murder him and his two sons. The description of what took place is too revolting to be quoted in full, but without some hint of the details it would be

impossible to understand the character of the liberators of Macedonia.

"Then, attacking his second son, Anastasius, they submitted him, under the eyes of his aged father, to unheard-of tortures. They flayed the skin off his neck, cut off his lips, nose, and ears, as also . . . , and, putting out his eyes, stabbed him so many times that his body was unrecognisable. Neither the young man's screams nor the entreaties of wife and mother could melt the brutal hearts of the murderers," etc.

It must be repeated again and again that this frightful scene, and others like it, took place before a single Greek band had taken the field, and when English journalists, in sympathy with the perpetrators, were publicly taunting the Greeks with cowardice for not forming such bands—the same journalists who have since emptied their inkpots in denunciation of the long-delayed reprisals.

The Archbishop of Castoria reports an act of cannibalism :

"Even this bestiality of these tigers was surpassed by what they did to the seven-year-old child of Michael. The sufferings inflicted on this poor babe are unbelievable, your Holiness, but are borne out by eye-witnesses. They first slaughtered the child like a lamb, and then, filling a bowl with its steaming blood, drank it like bloodthirsty hyenas. They afterwards cut open the breast and belly, and, tearing out the entrails, scattered them in the streets ; then, transfixing the body on a lance, carried it in turns, as a slaughterer carries a sheep to the butchers, and afterwards, throwing it into a ditch, an unshapely mass, retired to seek another victim."

The other victim escaped them—"succeeded in escaping to a Turkish neighbour's house."

Merely to read of such things turns the heart sick. What effect must they have produced on the Bishop, who heard the story from the eye-witnesses, and saw that battered little corpse ?

I had called upon the Archbishop of Castoria before visiting the Patriarch, but had not found him in. I therefore drew the Patriarch's attention, on his behalf, to the extraordinary attack made on him in his character as a priest, and expressed the opinion that it should receive some reply. His Holiness was naturally not a little astonished to learn that one of his metropolitans, at this moment a member of the Holy Synod, had professed himself a freethinker, and he undertook to bring the matter to the notice of the Archbishop.

While in the Phanar I called upon the Archbishop of Monastir, who, like his brother of Castoria, has fallen under the ban of the Turkish authorities for his political activity, and, like him, is residing in Constantinople in a sort of honourable exile as a member of the Holy Synod.

His Eminence handed me the following document, which he had that day received from his deputy at Monastir. It was my first bit of direct evidence, and it throws an interesting light upon the true character of the Folk War.

"MACEDONIA, FLORINA, *October 22, 1907.*

"*From* THE BULGARIAN REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE

"To our *Bulgarian* brethren of the village of Aghia Parashevi, whom, since they do not at present recognise their *true nationality*, we call Grecomaniacs.

"Brethren, elders, priests, and young men :

"We greatly regret that you should still be in darkness and error.

"We invite you to see things clearly, so that we may be able to clasp you by the hand.

"We are not desirous of shedding our brothers' blood, but if you oblige us we shall do it without mercy.

"Choose, therefore, two or three persons, and send them to us, so that we may understand one another, for we are disposed to pardon you everything.

"We have waited up to the present, and have



shown much patience, hoping that you might yet follow the right path, but unhappily you have done the contrary. Besides having acted without conscience, you have shown yourselves to be our enemies by lending your aid to the Bands,<sup>1</sup> massacring our travellers and peasants, and by other savage acts; finally you threaten to turn us into *Greeks*.

"We have patiently borne all this, and so you boast of what you have done.

"Thus matters stand to-day.

"We therefore inform you that, if you will not join yourselves to us, we also will massacre you, hang you, burn your houses, and reduce everything to dust and ashes. It is shameful that you should call yourselves *Greeks* and separate yourselves from us. You look upon the *Greeks* as brothers instead of enemies—those *Greeks* who are the cause of all your calamities.

"Once more we fraternally invite you to join us.

"If on this occasion you still refuse to recognise to which party you rightly belong, then beware.

"No matter where you go we shall exterminate you. Perhaps you are saying to yourselves: 'The Bulgarian Comitadjis are so few in number; how can they possibly harm us?'

"Nevertheless, thousands of us can collect in a night and execute everything we may have determined upon.

"Do not, therefore, deceive yourselves, unless you wish to be utterly destroyed.

"We confine ourselves to the above warning for the present, whilst awaiting your reply.

"ATTAR PASSAS and ATHANASE KARADAK."

In this document, from start to finish, there is not one word about the liberation of Macedonia. There is not one word about the Turkish oppression. On the contrary, it is the Greeks who are described as the enemies and the cause of all calamities. It is a manifesto of annexation pure and simple. The villagers to whom it is addressed are not invited to sink their differences and unite in fighting the Government.

<sup>1</sup> Of course the Greek bands are meant.

They are not offered the alternative of remaining peaceful. They are ordered to embrace Bulgarian nationality, and to join the Bulgarian party in its work of making further converts by similar means. The choice put before them is between Bulgarisation and extermination.

Why?

Let me lay beside this document the open letter addressed to Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria by Mr. Bizoff, formerly a Bulgarian commercial agent, and dated April 26, 1899 :

"It is a blindness of the Minister Grecoff, and one which carries with it the ruin of Bulgaria, to believe that it is possible to increase the success gained till now by Bulgarians in Macedonia by means of the ecclesiastical and scholastic system. The activity of Bulgaria is arrested in that direction; we can gain nothing more by the church and the school. The more the existing situation is prolonged the more ground our adversaries will gain, and the worse position we shall be in. All the friendly concessions that we can hope from Turkey have been obtained. A new favour from the Porte, if it were ever possible, would bring us more hurt than profit, for it would turn us from the main end, which ought to be to prepare ourselves to liberate Macedonia, purely and simply. That is why Bulgaria ought to take arms, and *possess herself by force of Macedonia, which otherwise will be forever lost to her.*"

In that letter, as in the Comitadji manifesto, where is there a word about the Turkish oppressor? Where are the ferocious soldiery, the grinding tax-gatherers, or the corrupt pashas? Where are the stricken peasants dying of starvation, or taking to their beds from sheer fear, that figure so prominently in the Comitadji literature? From first to last it is a bare-faced scheme of territorial expansion. The Principality wants Macedonia; she cannot get it by fair means, and so she must use foul. The Greeks are beating

them in the work of education, but they can beat the Greeks in brigandage. The Macedonians cannot be converted by peaceful methods ; they shall be converted by force.

The two documents must be read together, for they explain each other. They are not two documents, but one. They are the revelation of a policy and a purpose which has converted Macedonia into a hell, and has at last sickened the conscience and provoked the repudiation of every respectable Bulgarian.

The day after my visit to the Phanar the Archbishop of Castoria came to see me at my hotel. I need not describe this now famous prelate, who has become a target for all the Comitadji writers of Europe. I told his Eminence what had been said about him in England, and that I thought it fair to offer him the opportunity of explaining himself.

The Archbishop was considerably moved. He had known nothing previously of Mr. Brailsford's book, and, not having a copy with me, I could only repeat what I remembered of the incriminating passages.

His Eminence told me that he perfectly recollected receiving a call from Mr. Brailsford. They spoke in German, but they had no confidential conversation.

I asked the Archbishop if it were true that he had avowed himself a freethinker. Placing his hand on his breast with a gesture full of dignity, he responded :

"If I were going to say such a thing as that, even to an intimate friend, I should first strip off the robes I wear."

He went on to add :

"I knew quite well that Mr. Brailsford would publish everything I said. I knew that he was an enemy of the Greeks. Therefore, even if I had thought such things, I could not have said them."

His Eminence considered that the object of the attacks to which he has been exposed was to get him removed from his diocese, and thus deprive the

Greeks of his protection. He was in the habit of riding through the villages to encourage his flock, and any one who knows peasant life will understand what an effect such visits must have produced. While in Macedonia I was myself thanked by some villagers among whom I went for the "encouragement" my visit had given them. And I had come with an escort of twenty Turkish soldiers!

The Archbishop told me that he was one of those Greek prelates who are engaged in working for a union between the Greek and English Churches. The Bishop of Gibraltar lately visited Constantinople with such an end in view, and I understand that each Church now has an agent residing at the headquarters of the other.

I thought it too puerile to question him about the famous photograph, but his Eminence had evidently heard of this charge, and volunteered an explanation.

"I was going up one day to see the governor on business. I found him standing in front of the Konak with the commandant and other officers. They were just going to be photographed, and they asked me to stand beside them. How could I refuse?"

Returning to the subject of Mr. Brailsford, the Archbishop told me that that gentleman had relations only with the Bulgarians. He had none with the Greeks, and never went into a Greek village.<sup>1</sup> "He behaved like a Bulgarian agent."

A hospital was organised by Mr. Brailsford, as I understood, in Castoria. "It was not so much to help the wounded, as a political demonstration on behalf of the Bulgarians."

The Archbishop repeated that the visit to himself was purely official and formal, and that, knowing his caller's Bulgarian sympathies, he was reserved with him.

I then referred to the "tale" of the murdered

<sup>1</sup> It is fair to give Mr. Brailsford's defence. There really are no Greek villages in Macedonia. See *Macedonia*, pp. 197, 198.

brigand. His Eminence informed me that the victim was killed by Greek peasants speaking Slave. He himself knew nothing of the incident till afterwards. At that time there were no Greek bands. (We have seen that one Comitadji writer did not believe there would be any.) The photograph of the severed head was taken by the Turks, and no copy ever hung in the Archbishop's house.

I have since questioned other Greek prelates on this latter point, and I found them unanimous in saying that it was impossible that a Bishop should have such a photograph hanging on his wall. I am inclined to think that the author of *Macedonia* must have seen the photograph elsewhere, and that, writing long afterwards from memory, his recollections became confused.

However, I hold no brief for the Archbishop of Castoria. I have let him tell his own story, and I must leave it to each reader to form his own opinion.

One thing is certain. In Rumelia a visitor may be Philhellene or Bulgarophile, but he cannot be both. If he possesses the friendship and confidence of one side, he will never gain that of the other. I myself entered the country under Greek auspices, with Greek introductions, and the Greeks trusted me. I made some way in winning the friendship and confidence of the Turks. But for the Bulgarians I remained what Mr. Brailsford remained for the Greeks, a person to be treated with all courtesy, but with no real confidence.

After all, is it so different in our own country? Is the man who comes into an English constituency as the Liberal candidate likely to see much of the Conservatives, or a Unionist to be taken into the counsels of the Socialists? Do Catholics confide the secrets of their communion to Protestants, or do Baptists place their trust in members of the English Church Union?

Let us be zealous, if we will, in extracting the mote from Greek and Turkish and Bulgarian eyes, but let



GREEK MACEDONIAN BAND UNDER "CAPTAIN VARDAS."

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us not be quite so harsh with them as if there were no beam in our own.

The lamented death of Sir Nicholas O'Connor, British Ambassador in Constantinople, which took place while I was writing this Report, enables me to add to its value by including my recollections of what passed between us. Sir Nicholas had two conversations with me of a partly confidential character, and almost his last words to me were: "Of course I must not appear in your book; I am an abstraction." That injunction was due to the divergence between the Ambassador's private views, which he had permitted me to obtain a pretty fair notion of, and those to which he was committed officially as the mouthpiece of the Foreign Office; and I believe I shall now do what he would have himself wished in giving his fellow-countrymen the benefit of his real opinion, the opinion of a man of rare integrity and kindness of heart, as well as long experience in the most difficult of diplomatic posts. Naturally, the most delicate and difficult part of my task in drawing up this Report has been to decide how much of the communications made to me were intended to be private; and I can only hope that I have erred on the side of caution, and included nothing that could deprive me of the confidence with which I found myself treated by so many distinguished personages of such different parties and sympathies.

I first saw Sir Nicholas O'Connor on my way out, as the result of a note in which I explained the objects of my journey, at the same time mentioning the name of a mutual friend. He received me with personal friendliness, but I saw that he was rather shy of me politically.

My first words were directed to assure his Excellency that I had come out with an open mind, and that even if I could do no good I should be glad of any advice from him that would save me from doing harm. I referred to some English politicians of



distinction who had recently made a short trip in Macedonia in the character of Bulgarian champions, and asked him to tell me, frankly, what effect he thought such visits produced.

The Ambassador laughed.

"Well, I told *them* pretty plainly what I thought," was his reply.

He went on to explain that the mischief lay in advocating ideal remedies which were impracticable in the circumstances of the country. "The man who thinks he has got an ideal solution is only doing harm. As I said to them, *this is not our pigeon*. We can only go one step at a time."

The Ambassador clearly meant to convey that it was useless for English philanthropists to advocate solutions which were incompatible with the views and interests of Powers more closely concerned in the Macedonian question than Great Britain. The best chance of doing good was to follow the line of least resistance.

Finding that I was willing to learn, Sir Nicholas went on to explain the difficulty of putting a stop to the inter-Christian strife. Some months before the Powers had addressed a note to the Governments of Sofia and Athens, insisting on the withdrawal of the armed bands. The Greeks had complied with this demand, whereupon the Bulgarians took advantage of their withdrawal to increase their activity, and several Greek villages had been destroyed. As a result the Greeks were now resuming operations. "It is a vicious circle," the Ambassador pronounced despairingly.

This seemed to me to tell strongly in favour of the Greeks. But on my conveying to his Excellency on which side my sympathies lay, I thought he showed some anxiety to convince me that one side was no better than the other. He told me the story of a Greek atrocity which had just been reported to the Embassy. A party of Bulgarian labourers, going into

the peninsula of Chalcidice to work in the mines, had been waylaid by a Greek band, and massacred in cold blood. "It was a frightful thing to do," he commented.

And frightful enough it was in all conscience, even if not marked by the loathsome features of some of the Bulgarian atrocities. Yet it cannot be judged fairly unless we bear in mind that Chalcidice is the most purely and exclusively Greek district in the whole of Macedonia; that the Powers had practically invited the rival claimants to make good their title on a basis of population; and that, in consequence, the Bulgars have been steadily pushing down for some years past into the Greek coast region. From the Greek point of view those unarmed labourers were the vanguard of an invading army, coming to occupy and annex Hellenic territory. Had they attempted to enter the Greek kingdom they could have been turned back in the same way that Chinese immigrants are turned back by the United States; but such peaceful methods are not possible when the government is in other hands. It is this circumstance which gives to the Folk War its peculiar character. It is a true war, as far as the parties to it are concerned, but it is being waged on the territory of a government foreign to both sides, in whose eyes the opposing forces are murderers and outlaws. Neither the Greeks nor the Bulgars nor the Turks are altogether to blame for the resulting atrocities. The real responsibility must rest where the real power rests.

Sir Nicholas O'Connor allowed me to see that his own sympathies lay rather with the Turks than with either of the Christian antagonists. The Powers had recently relieved the Porte from its perennial financial straits by permitting a slight increase in the customs.

"Since the customs have been raised," he told me, "the troops have been paid regularly, and they have really been behaving very well. For the last three

months we have received no complaints at the Embassy. What with all the attention that has been turned on the country, and all the Europeans who are going about, the Turks cannot do anything very bad."

It struck me that this last remark was a strong justification of the existence of the Balkan Committee, if not for the partisan attitude of some of its members. It was entirely in accord with the views expressed to me at various times by other English friends of Turkey and the Turks. The simple fact, which is so often overlooked, is that there are good and bad Turks, just as there are good and bad Christians, and that the hands of the better sort are strengthened by an attitude of wise and discriminating vigilance on the part of friendly Europeans.

I ventured to say to the Ambassador that I had heard of the Sultan recently buying lands in Epirus, and replacing the Christian cultivators by Moslems. He appeared surprised to find that this incident had reached my ears, and assured me that the expulsion of the Christians had not been persisted in.

The impression left on my mind by this conversation was that there was some divergence between the views of the permanent staff of the Foreign Office and those of the present majority in the House of Commons, the former inclining somewhat to a return to the Beaconsfield policy of supporting the Turkish empire. It was evident to me on which side Sir Nicholas O'Connor's private sympathies lay, while it was not less evident that he was subordinating them to his duty as a faithful interpreter of the official policy of his Government.

These impressions were further confirmed by the conversation I had with him on my return. I had not sought out the Ambassador on this occasion, as I thought it just possible that it might embarrass him if any portion of my book appeared to be written under his inspiration; and, having been treated with

inexplicable discourtesy by a well-known Pasha in the entourage of the Sultan, I was on the point of quitting Constantinople when I suddenly received a note from Sir Nicholas asking me to dine with him at two days' notice. I confess that this coincidence caused me to suspect that the Ambassador was kept pretty well informed of what went on behind the scenes, and that he wished to mark his sense of the treatment I had been exposed to.

After dinner he took me apart and made me tell him what I had observed during my journey; and I observed that when I related something calculated to win sympathy for the Turks, he remarked in a sort of aside: "That story will make a strong impression on the English public"—a delicate way of asking me to be sure and include it in my Report. I thought it a delightful touch of old-fashioned diplomatic finesse, almost in the vein of a fictitious Ambassador for whom I was responsible in former days.

On this occasion, also, Sir Nicholas went a little out of his way, I thought, to tell me of another atrocity committed by a Greek band; and he expressed the opinion that I ought to visit Sofia, no doubt to counteract the impressions of Athens.

It is right that I should record that he expressed himself in favour of doubling the gendarmery force, which he believed would then be able to cope with the bands. With this view I was in complete disagreement, for reasons which I shall give hereafter.

Altogether I was most flattered and charmed by the interest in my mission shown by so distinguished a man, an interest which caused him to delay his game of bridge. I had, further, the good fortune to be his partner at the table, and to receive his congratulations on making the grand slam at no trumps.

It was when I was taking leave of Sir Nicholas O'Connor at the end of our first interview that he uttered the words that I have endeavoured to take as

the motto of this Report. I had again expressed my desire to be saved from taking any line calculated to do mischief, and asked him for his advice. He hesitated for a moment, and then, as it were, jerked out : "Why not tell the truth and shame the devil?" Surely remarkable advice to be given by a man grown grey in the diplomatic service to an unofficial representative of the Liberal democracy!

If I have not succeeded in telling the truth, I can at all events claim to have felt more keenly than some writers who have preceded me the difficulties in the way of telling it. In any case, it has appeared to me that I have had one advantage over most European travellers in Turkey.

They seem to have come there straight from some happy land where discontent, and the causes of discontent, did not exist. They have left a land whose government commanded the approval and support of all men of every party; whose courts were renowned for their cheap and speedy settlement of every dispute; whose army stood in need of no reform; whose religious denominations knew no rivalry except in Christian love and meekness towards one another; whose cities contained no slums, and hid no misery; whose landlords were all enlightened philanthropists, and whose peasantry was wholly virtuous, prosperous and contented; a land in which secret commissions were unknown; in which favouritism was never heard of; in whose air blackmailers could not breathe; a land free from crime, free from degrading vice, free from dishonesty and untruthfulness, where every man lived on purely and happily, without a grievance and without a care. They have left that land, and they have come straight into one in which the government has many faults, and the people have many defects, and the experience has amazed and shocked them. They have sought for an explanation of this sad difference between Rumelia and their own paradise,

and they have found it in religion. They have found that Islam is the cause of all the ills that flesh is heir to in the lands where it prevails. And so, after gazing with sympathetic eyes upon the spectacle of Christians torturing Christians, Christians burning Christians alive, Christians cutting off the noses and ears of Christians, while the surrounding Moslems dwelt in peace and friendship with their neighbours, they have prescribed as the specific for all these ills—a Christian governor!

I have never seen that happy land of theirs, never heard where it may be found. I know something of Nigeria, something of Ireland, something of England. I myself have had the task of ruling and maintaining order among a mixed population of from a quarter of a million to half a million souls, many of them Moslems—the best of them Moslems—and my staff consisted of a man suspected of theft and extortion, a clerk who had “done time” for embezzlement, an interpreter who was accused of blackmailing, and six black policemen described to me on my arrival as the worst criminals in the country, except the soldiers.

It was with this experience in my mind that I came into Rumelia. I came prepared to try the country by real standards of comparison, and not ideal ones. I came prepared to see if it were less civilised than Nigeria, if the inhabitants were less loyal than the natives of Bengal, if the peasantry were more wretched than the Irish, and if the towns held more misery than the capital of the British empire.

The reader shall hear what I found.

I left Constantinople without having exchanged a word with a single Turk. I might have been passing a week in Pekin or Valparaiso. It was wholly characteristic of the country, and of the attitude of “Europe” towards it. I tried to obtain an

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introduction to the Sheik-ul-Islam, but I failed. I had entered Constantinople as a Greek, and I left it as one. On the day after my departure for Adrianople *The Levant Herald* announced that on the night before I left the Greek Minister and Madame Gryparis had offered me a dinner.

The Bulgarians were warned!

## CHAPTER IV

### UNKNOWN TURKEY

The Christian dragoman—A British welcome—The two cats—Kirk-Kilissi—The Bulgarian Peril—A Turkish Governor—A Greek school—The Turk as Peacemaker—An *Entente Cordiale*—A soldier's compliment.

THE puzzle that remained with me during a considerable part of my tour was to know whether I was travelling through the country as an honoured guest, or as a prisoner of State.

The Christian dragomans whom I was obliged to employ invariably took the latter view. The one whom I engaged in Constantinople described himself to me as a Slave of Austrian nationality. At Drama I heard he was fraternising with the Servian ex-captain of cavalry (possibly a regicide) who acted as kavass to the British officers. On my return I was informed he was a Montenegrin. Which of the three he really was I have no idea, and it would not surprise me to find that he was a Russian. In the same way the dragoman whom I took on at Salonika, a Greek expelled from Bulgaria by the outrages already described, thought it well to announce himself wherever we went as a Slave of Constantinople.

I do not know why. It seems to be the custom of the country. Mystery has a fascination for most of us. To pass under a false name, to whisper dark things in a corner, to keep all kinds of secrets up



one's sleeve, is one of the pleasures of living in Turkey. It is the life of the Arabian Nights. The further I went, the more fully I realised that I was on a tour in Fairyland.

My Austrian, or Servian, or Montenegrin, or whatever he was, was very anxious to enshroud me in a similar disguise. He actually proposed passing me off on the authorities as an archæologist. He succeeded, after a severe struggle, in getting them to accept me as a tourist, travelling for his pleasure. The English are known to be eccentric, but even the Turkish police boggled at the idea of an English traveller selecting the depth of winter for a holiday jaunt among the kidnappers of the Rumelian highlands. My dragoman returned to me after three hours spent in the bureau which issues passports for the interior, boasting that he had wrung my passport out of them by threatening them with the British Consulate.

It was another indication. I had come into Turkey, having no quarrel with the authorities, and solely concerned in the settlement of an inter-Christian strife which they were far more interested in terminating than any foreigner could be. I was perfectly ready to comply with their reasonable regulations; and no one can say that it was not reasonable to require information about a stranger who proposed to visit the seat of a civil war. But my dragoman was a "Christian." I was, at least, a "European." And therefore he took it for granted that I should share his satisfaction in deceiving and browbeating the Government of the country in which I was a guest.

The incident was one of a series which have convinced me that it is a cause of grave injury to the Turkish Government that there are so few of its loyal subjects who can speak English or French. The traveller in Turkey finds himself throughout in the hands of a class of men who take advantage of

the fear felt for a European, to indulge in insolence towards the authorities in his name. I should be quite prepared to find that, in spite of my protestations to the contrary, many of the Turkish authorities were left with the impression that I had come among them as an enemy and a spy.

A journey of twelve hours in a very comfortable sleeping-car brought me to Adrianople. After a slight breakfast in a very poor inn opposite the station, I drove in a terrible springless carriage to the town, nearly two miles away, to call upon the British Consul, to whom our Ambassador had given me a letter of introduction.

I ought to add, perhaps, that this was the only hardship of that kind which I had to endure. Everywhere in Rumelia, even in the smallest towns, I found thoroughly comfortable carriages. And they were always drawn by two horses, if not by three.

The Consul, Major Samson, gave me a truly British welcome. Hardly had I sat down when he said, "Of course you will stop with us"—an invitation which I accepted as heartily as it was given.

We found out, later in the day, that his brother was an old friend of mine, a member of my own Circuit. Major Samson's family are from Haverfordwest, a town which I had last visited in the yacht of another Pembrokeshire man. The days which I spent under his roof and that of the kind and charming lady who shares her husband's remote quarters were the pleasantest I spent in Turkey.

I had come provided with an itinerary, in preparing which I had the advice of an officer attached to the Greek Foreign Office. This officer had personally visited every part of the vilayets of Salonika and Monastir in order to acquire material for the map which forms the appendix of this Report. It is a very striking piece of evidence as to the hold of Hellenism

on the country, a hold obtained by the most honourable means. As far as I was able to check its accuracy I found it remarkably trustworthy. In one place, Verria, there is a Rumanian school which is not shown in the map, and in another, Tirnovo, the map shows a Rumanian school which has ceased to exist.

As soon as I mentioned Kirk-Kilissi, the first place on my itinerary, Major Samson told me that I had been well advised. The mutessarif, or governor of the sandjak, was a superior man, and I should find much to interest me in the town. A sandjak is a portion of a vilayet, larger in extent than the ordinary department, called a caza, and its governor usually has the rank of pasha. It appeared to me that the position of a mutessarif bore the closest possible resemblance to that which I had held as resident of a Nigerian province, although my functions were rather more onerous, including as they did those of a judge with unlimited jurisdiction; and, of course, my province was greatly superior in point of size.

The day after my arrival at Adrianople I set out for Kirk-Kilissi, a ten hours' drive by carriage over a road quite equal to all but the best-kept roads in the rural parts of England.

We stopped half-way at a small village coffee-house, where I lunched off the food brought with me by my dragoman, who shared in the repast. In the room where we sat, a number of the villagers were loafing over coffee and cigarettes in a way that suggested that they must find life an easier thing than it is found by the peasantry in some parts of Europe.

There were two cats which we fed while we ate. One was a great, handsome Angora, of fierce disposition, which clawed savagely at our hands as it snatched the morsels; the other was a short-haired, black cat, which lurked meekly under the seat, and

only crept forward to pick up what we threw to it after its rival had gone away. I christened them the Moslem and the Christian cat, a nomenclature which appealed strongly to the Christian dragoman.

I recall this very trivial incident because it illustrates the ideas which I brought with me into Rumelia. They are, I think, the ideas of "Europe."

In our nurseries, if a child shows a boisterous and ungovernable disposition, we call him a "young Turk." A favourite figure in our nursery tales is that of the terrible Turk, with his big turban, and big beard, and baggy trousers, his curly moustache, curly slippers, and curly scimitar. The redoubtable Bluebeard, according to historians, was actually a French or Breton noble; but he is always pictured as a Turk. Such ideas, so early implanted, are never really effaced.

For a hundred years past those Powers which hope to aggrandise themselves at the expense of Turkey, and those aspiring peoples which have desired foreign aid in overthrowing their old conquerors, have deluged Europe with denunciations of the Turk. The cause of Christianity, the cause of liberty, and the cause of territorial greed have found a common enemy in the Turk. In the year 1876 two of these causes found a champion in the most powerful popular orator since Demosthenes.

Gladstone, a name which I have never heard mentioned by any Turk except in terms of sincere respect, had two supreme interests at heart—what he believed to be Christianity, and what he believed to be freedom. On many occasions in his life one of these interests pleaded against the other. Over the question of Bulgaria the two were united, and the result was tremendous.

The great statesman then at the helm of the British empire trimmed his sails to the wind, and brought the ship into port. What was genuinely Bulgarian territory was rendered independent; but the ambi-

tions of Russia were repressed, Turkey was safeguarded, and the future was left open for Greece.

This result could not satisfy Gladstone. The General Election of 1880 was one of the few ever fought in England on a question of foreign politics, and it resulted in an overwhelming condemnation of the Turk for the "Bulgarian atrocities"—a strangely prophetic phrase!

That decision of the electorate was loyally accepted by the followers of Beaconsfield, and their new leader afterwards emulated Gladstone in his language about Turkey and her sovereign. For the last thirty years a stream of vituperation without example in the history of the world has been poured out upon the Turks, and a personal friend of mine has been guilty of recommending in his paper that the Sultan should be assassinated.

The Turks have attempted no serious defence of themselves, their Sultan, or their religion. They are accustomed to Christian fanaticism, and they have learnt by experience to let it rage.

Islam may not be the best religion, but yet it may be the best religion for those who profess it. In Africa it has a better influence than English Christianity, in the opinion of almost every one, not a missionary, who has ever lived in Africa. And even in Europe it can no longer be pretended that the Moslem is a worse Christian (if I may put my own sense upon that word) than the "Christians" who are drinking blood in Macedonia.

I reached Kirk-Kilissi, the town of the Forty Churches—or rather forty shrines—as dusk was falling. On the way I had passed three villages, Greek, Turk, and Bulgarian. The Greek looked the most civilised, the Bulgarian was by far the most prosperous in sheep and cattle, the Turkish was the most primitive and humble.

As we drove in I was surprised to see young trees planted along the side of the street. I thought of

the London County Council, and rubbed my eyes. The hotel proved to be poor enough; Kirk-Kilissi may average two or three European visitors in a year, and those commercial travellers from Austria. The door of the room in which I took my meals grated miserably on its hinges. My dragoman told me that the town wanted a branch line to the railway, but that the Government prevented it.

"The Government does not prevent the landlord from oiling the hinges of that door," I suggested.

"It impeaches their spirits," he replied.

Unless I give some idea of the dragoman French through whose imperfect medium I was obliged to take cognisance of so much of Rumelia, as through a flawed pane of glass, the Englishman will gain no true idea of the obstacles that lie between him and the truth.

Scarcely any Englishman really knows Turkish. No Englishman can know all the Slave dialects of Rumelia. Few or none have ever tried to learn Vlach or Albanian. And probably no born Englishman thoroughly understands the peasant's Greek. For that reason alone Rumelia must remain more or less unknown to us. There is a deep significance in the saying of K'ung the Master—"He who does not know words does not know men."

My first visit the next morning was paid to the Greek Metropolitan, to whom I had a letter of introduction from the Greek Consul of Adrianople. He had gone into the country to conduct a funeral, but I was received by his archdeacon.

From him I learned that the population of the town was rather over 20,000, made up as follows :

Hellenes	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	9,210
Turks	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6,120
Bulgars	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4,045
Jews	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,526
Strangers	,	,	,	,	,	,	,	,	.	150
										<u>21,051</u>

These figures were accepted subsequently by the governor as fairly representative. They certainly do not seem to present a strong case for the annexation of Kirk-Kilissi by its ambitious northern neighbour. And yet, unless the march of events takes a new direction, Kirk-Kilissi will assuredly one day share the fate of Anchialos.

At the time of the insurrection of 1903, the Comitadjis made an attempt to Bulgarise this sandjak. Fortunately there were no Europeans to interfere, the Turks put forth their strength, and the movement was quickly and decisively put down.

But Kirk-Kilissi is only five hours from the frontier, and the Greeks are nervous. The archdeacon had heard that three officers of the Bulgarian army, named Madjaroff, Ikonomoff, and Katalikos, were hiding in Great Tirnovo, a smaller town in the mountainous part of the sandjak. The people of three Bulgarian villages to the north, Karanazu, Vaisul, and Tatarla, had left their homes and emigrated into the Principality, "to prepare for an invasion in the spring."

These rumours and alarms were not taken seriously by the Turkish governor and general, to whom I mentioned them later. The officers in Tirnovo were regarded as mythical. The villagers had had a bad harvest, and some of the younger men had gone elsewhere in search of work. It was believed that some had gone to take up the lands left vacant by the expulsion of the Greeks from Eastern Rumelia.

The archdeacon told me, also, of a youth of eighteen, named Skopelos, who had just been skinned alive by a band of six Bulgarians from Karamango, led by one Nicolas Philis. But the spot was some hours away, and I could get no confirmation of the story.

I arranged with the archdeacon to visit the Greek school later in the day, and then went to call on the mutessarif.

Galib Pasha, as he is named, received me with all courtesy, and ordered coffee and cigarettes for me and

my dragoman. In Turkey a dragoman may be a secretary of legation, or he may be a courier, and at first my Montenegrin or Servian or Austrian was a little inclined to assume the former rank.

It was my first interview with a Turk, and I set myself to win his confidence. I told him of my own experiences as a mutessarif in Nigeria, and mentioned my having built a mosque. The pasha listened in evident bewilderment. A Christian who had built a mosque must have been a novelty, in his experience of Christianity. We did not make much progress during this visit, but his Excellency arranged to call in the afternoon, and take me to see the Turkish school.

As it happened, the archdeacon was a little late, and the pasha a little before his time. They met in my room, and met with apparent friendliness. However, his Excellency was still slightly reserved with myself. No doubt he had had a telegram from Adrianople, the police had found out something about my dragoman, I had come into the district under false pretences as a tourist, and I was a friend of the Greeks.

I proposed a joint visit to both schools. It was accepted without demur, and we drove off, the governor and I in his carriage, and the archdeacon following with the dragoman in mine.

We went first to the Turkish school, which was newly built. I must confess that the words "Turkish school" suggested to me a bare floor with a circle of small boys squatting round a turbaned teacher reciting the Koran. I have seen such schools in Nigeria and Morocco. I found a handsome building fitted up with forms and desks, with globes and maps, with shelves of books, and all the appliances of a modern education. More surprising still, I found a large hall, fitted up at one end with a stage and curtain for concerts and theatrical performances. I found everything but boys: the Turkish schools open and close earlier than the Christian ones, and the scholars had gone home.

While we were driving through the streets I said



something to the pasha on the subject of the trees. His Excellency at once brightened up, and I learned that it was he who had planted them. I said (we both spoke in French):

"What I have seen of your town, so far, has rather taken me by surprise. I do not think people in England are accustomed to hear much good about Turkey. If there are any other things you would like me to see and report, I shall be glad if you will show them to me."

Galib Pasha took me at my word. On the way to the Greek school he turned aside to show me a "mill" where they made brandy. The proprietor of the mill was a young Greek, who had spent some years in Paris, and came back with a French wife. His manners were those of the boulevards. He quite patronised the governor, and hardly noticed the archdeacon. However, I had not time to see the mill. I found the boys at the Greek school were being kept in to wait my arrival, and I hurried off.

I watched with some curiosity to see how the Turkish governor would be received by the Greek boys. In spite of what I had seen already, I half expected them to show signs of fear when the terrible pasha appeared among them. Nothing of the sort. They were far less shy of him than the natives of Lokoja used to be of me.

In the first class we entered the boys were having a Turkish lesson. I asked the governor to put some questions to them, and he made one or two read passages aloud, and corrected them. His manner was perfectly kind, and the lads were evidently pleased by his notice.

We passed into the youngest class. And there, away on a back form, I caught sight of a little red fez. What did this mean? The schoolmaster explained. It was a little Turk who had come to the Greek school in order to learn Greek. I called out the youngster, patted him on the head, and asked if

the other boys treated him kindly. The schoolmaster answered for him that he was quite happy among them.

I thought it the most pleasant sight, and of the most hopeful augury, that I had seen since leaving Europe.

The Greek school, too, had its concert-hall. Indeed, it was fully evident where the architect of the Turkish school had found his model. Islam had paid to Hellas the compliment of imitation. It is not the first time that Hellas has conquered by her education those who had conquered her in arms.

From the school we went to the Greek Musical Society, where we heard "The Sultan's Hymn" and "God Save the King" very well executed by a band of youngsters in smart uniforms, with thoroughly good instruments. The conductor afterwards sent me a copy of a mazurka of his own composition.

We parted company with the archdeacon, and the governor took me on to the town hall. He told me, with evident satisfaction, that he had left the townspeople free to choose their own mayor, and they had elected an Israelite. Such a choice would be impossible in Russia, one of the Powers which we had called in to reform the government of Macedonia.

The mayor met us at the town hall, and showed me the plans of a public garden which I found in course of construction alongside of the building. It is to have grass for the children to play on, and flowerbeds, and a small lake, and a band-stand for the summer evenings. What could Mr. John Burns do more if he were governor of Kirk-Kilissi?

While we were driving back to the hotel the pasha said to me suddenly, "Have you confidence in your dragoman?"

"I have confidence in nobody but myself," I answered.

At once the last reserve disappeared. He arranged to come round and see me after dinner, without the

dragoman's presence. It was a confirmation of what I had suspected from the first.

Galib Pasha arrived at half-past seven, and stayed till half-past ten, and I never remember passing a more interesting three hours. I told him that my last visit to his country had been with arms in my hand in the van of an invading force. I described Nigeria to him, and astonished him with the news that in that country we tolerated domestic "slavery"; that is to say, we did not actively encourage the natives to desert their employment, and become vagabonds. I related how I had found my chief town in a state of anarchy under a runaway slave, who since his accession to the throne had received six months' imprisonment for man-stealing, but had curried favour with the white man in the character of a Christian convert and a procurer; and how I had replaced him by the rightful heir, who happened to be a Moslem and an honest man.

Galib Pasha, on his side, talked to me freely of his country, his family, and his policy as governor. Two of his sons were learning English in a Christian school, the famous Robert College at Constantinople, and he was learning it from them. He had brought round with him the book he was then working at—it was *East Lynne*!—and there, by a 'smoking lamp, in that little room of a Greek hostelry in a remote Rumelian town, the Turkish pasha read aloud the woes of Lady Isabel, while I corrected his pronunciation.

He told me that he was honoured by the friendship of the Grand Vizier, Ferid Pasha, and I found afterwards that he had written to that great functionary about my visit. He described how he, in common with every patriotic Moslem, was working to put down religious strife, and teach all races and religions to live in harmony, as the sole means of safeguarding their country from the grip of foreign Powers. In Kirk-Kilissi he had, to some extent, succeeded. He

had contrived concerts and picnics as a means of bringing the people together, and he had induced all creeds to join in building a theatre.

At a later date I repeated some of these things to a British official, who shall be nameless. He responded :

" I should have thought there were things a Turkish town needed much more than a theatre."

It was the usual sneer, that fatal Britannic sneer which costs England all the love she would otherwise receive for her good works. In Kirk-Kilissi, at least, I had found the Turk doing his best. He is conscious of his own deficiencies, which some of us are not. He knows that he is behind Europe in many things, in the knowledge of flying-machines and motor-cars, and strikes and dynamite. He is educating himself as hard as he can. A very little praise, a very little encouragement, from Europe, and above all from England, would do much to strengthen his hands against those onlookers who do not want him to succeed, whose interest it is that Turkey should stagnate, and decay, and drop into their grasp. And his efforts are rewarded with insulting scorn. It is like the man in Mr. Pinero's play—" Blame, blame ; but praise, oh dear, no !"

What is it that Kirk-Kilissi needs more than a theatre ? Drains, perhaps. Galib Pasha has done wrong in thinking of the soul before the body, in putting Mary above Martha. And yet this theatre of his is a spiritual drain-pipe, devised to carry off the foul dregs of racial and religious hatred, and to spare Kirk-Kilissi the plague that has ravaged Macedonia.

In view of subsequent events, I feel at liberty to mention that I sounded Galib Pasha on the attitude of the Sultan. I did not believe, I do not now believe, that I should act wisely in meddling with what may be considered the strictly domestic side of Turkish politics. Whether the Turks or any other people should live under a despotic or a constitutional government is a question entirely for themselves to

decide. But the course of events during the last hundred years undoubtedly does justify, and even require, England's interesting herself in the relations between the Turks and their Christian subjects, and to the extent that a change of government is likely to improve those relations we are bound to welcome and to support it.

Clearly, if there were a word of truth in the stock charges against Abdul Hamid II. of hating his Christian subjects and desiring to promote dissension among them, the governor of Kirk-Kilissi was playing a very dangerous game. I asked if I should run any risk of injuring him by reporting what I had seen. Galib Pasha had evidently not heard of these fantastic charges, for he not only authorised me to write freely, but even sent me round a memorandum before I left of the points which he wished me to include in my Report. He asked me to give the credit of his work to the Sultan, a request which may have proceeded from modesty or from loyalty, or from a desire to conciliate the good will of his Imperial Majesty—in any case, it was in keeping with Oriental etiquette. He further informed me that there was a keen rivalry between the Palace and the Porte—a state of things which was fairly evident to me on my return to Constantinople. The Sultan's regular Ministers were inspired by very much the same patriotic intentions as the Young Turks, but unfortunately they were opposed at every turn by the clique which had succeeded in persuading Abdul Hamid II. that his people were his natural enemies.

I give the Turkish pasha's note, exactly as he wrote it. I do not think it will injure him in the esteem of any one whose esteem is worth possessing.

“Kirk-Kilisse is a more important department of the province of Adrinopel.

“There is six districts, the two of which (Vassilikos and Midia) situated on the bank of the black sea, the

other two (Tirnovo and Viza) in the mountains, and the others (Baba-Eski and Lulé-Bourgas) are on the railroad.

"Kirk-Kilisse (the governor's residence) is a town very lively and well arranged, were are twenty-five thousand inhabitants. There are three great schools, one of which that is more beautyfull appartains at the Mussulmans, and the others at the Greecks and the Israelitishs.

"The trees are planted in the streets sides. It is arranged a public garden on a pretty plane, and they will build a great theatre and the casino in the side of which.

"It is very difficult to direct that department were are the different and hostiles inhabitants (Mussulmans, Greecks, Bulgars, Jewishhs). But for to annihilate the hostility the government arranges the concerts, the representations, and the picnics with them."

The writer of that memorandum was the representative of a Government which is constantly charged with acting on the principle "divide and govern." During a drive together we passed the Christian cemetery. "The Bulgars and Greeks used to be buried there together," the pasha remarked rather sadly. "Now the Bulgars have a cemetery of their own." Alas, it does not require the craft of Machiavelli to divide the races in Rumelia. The real difficulty is to unite these "different and hostile inhabitants."

I was so much interested by Kirk-Kilissi that I decided to remain another day.

The next morning Galib Pasha took me, by my request, to see the barracks, the headquarters of a division composed of ten battalions of infantry, with cavalry, artillery, and a mountain battery of mule-guns for use against brigands or bands.

The military commandant, Hisni Pasha, received me very kindly, and invited me to return in the afternoon to witness the exercises of the troops. I ventured to tell him that I had already been agreeably surprised to see that the men were in perfect trim, as certain

English writers were in the habit of referring to the Turkish soldiery as "ragged battalions." The general raised his hand to his head.

"We owe all to our Sultan," he said simply.

But it is useless to refute a sneer. I shall merely have given the Comitadji Press a pretext for saying in future that the Sultan wrung taxes out of the oppressed peasantry in order to lavish the money on expensive uniforms for his troops.

At midday I had the honour of receiving a visit from the masters of the Greek school, to the number of seven, who presented me with the following address, in French. (I must apologise for transcribing the word "Excellency," but in the East such terms are a matter of courtesy, and before I reached the end of my tour I was promoted to "Lord," and even "Highness.")

#### EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY OF KIRK-KILISSI

*December 24, 1907.*

"EXCELLENCY,

"The visit you were good enough to make yesterday to the central school of the Greek community of our town has touched us deeply.

"In coming to return this visit, on behalf of our young pupils, we wish to pay a grateful homage to the man who cares for learning and interests himself in the future of our schools.

"We hope that your Excellency will always remember us among your concerns, and we desire that you may be the vehicle of the good wishes that the Greek population of our town always forms for the prosperity of your great country, England.

"MICHAEL J. LYKIDES, *President.*

"SOPHOCLES D. DADAKIS, *Secretary.*"

The Greek head master impressed me not less favourably than the Turkish governor. It was easy to see that his soul was in his task. I had a most

encouraging conversation with them all, and they expressed the most friendly sentiments towards the Moslems.

"We desire to hold out our hands to the Turks. We think a good understanding is necessary for them and for us. Our mission is to civilise—we schoolmasters. We are prepared to live on good terms with the Turks."

Are these better or worse sentiments than those of hatred and revenge?

When I repeated these words to a Greek statesman on my return to Athens, he suggested that the schoolmasters were not at liberty to express their true sentiments. I can only say that had they spoken in an opposite sense I should have been careful to record their testimony in such a way as not to hurt them, as I have recorded such testimony elsewhere. In my own opinion the schoolmasters were sincere, and I think their attitude is intelligible. Of course, all patriotic Greeks would rather belong to their own country than to another in which a different race is master. But where they find themselves living, as a minority, in some quarter remote from Greece, it is clearly wise and right for them, while continuing to belong to Hellas in a spiritual sense, to try to live on good terms with the people they are among, and to show loyalty to the Government which protects them. Until recently there were Greeks in Bulgaria, and Greeks in Rumania; there are still Greeks in Egypt and in Syria. Of what possible service can it be to the Greek kingdom, or to the Hellenist cause, that these scattered colonies should cultivate a temper of hatred towards their neighbours, or should cherish schemes of setting up Greek rule in those distant countries? After the experience of the last few years the wiser Greeks in northern Rumelia are beginning to recognise that any change from the present state of things may easily be a change for the worse, as far as their nationality is concerned.



All Turkish towns are not like Kirk-Kilissi, and governors like Galib Pasha are few and far between under any régime. The Greek soul is restless, and free Hellas attracts her separated children as the lighthouse attracts the sea-birds from afar. There are provinces of Turkey in which the aspiration for union with Athens is reasonable, there are others in which it is as unreasonable as would be an ambition on the part of the Irish in the United States to set up the Irish republic in America. And the difference is not always clearly perceived in Athens. The policy of the Greek kingdom is too much influenced by Byzantine traditions, and her politicians sometimes dream of biting off more than they are strong enough to chew.

Power is often the best cure for intolerance. In proportion as their kingdom expands, and the Greeks find themselves ruling over Turks in Thessaly, in Crete, and elsewhere, their feeling towards the Turk must change. Every violent and intolerant expression towards the Turk of Adrianople disqualifies them to govern the Turk of Salonika. In the end they will perceive that, unless and until the Greeks are strong enough to win and hold Constantinople themselves, the Turk is their best guardian against the invader from the north. Misery makes strange bedfellows, and danger brings about strange alliances.

In a town nearer to the Greek frontier than Kirk-Kilissi, and in a school where half the children were learning Greek for the first time, I had a glimpse into the heart of Hellenism as it beats under the outward garb of Turkish citizenship. I had asked the mistress of the infant class to let the children sing, and they sang "The Song of the Flag." The words did not say which flag was meant, but while they were singing I noticed that each child was holding its hand sideways across its breast, with the fingers outstretched. I recognised it in a

moment. The fingers represented the blue and white stripes of a certain flag under which I had once fought! I turned to the schoolmistress, and, after being assured that I should not betray her confidence, she confessed. I believe that touching masonic sign was her own inspiration; at least, when I described it to my friends on my return to Athens I found that they had never heard of it.

I hope a time may come when "The Song of the Flag" may be sung, with that picturesque accompaniment, under the eyes of Turkish governors like Galib Pasha as freely as "Scots Wha Hae" is sung in the heart of London.

At two o'clock I returned to the barracks. The troops had gathered in the great exercise ground. Hisni Pasha placed me in front, and, before I realised what was happening, I found the whole division was marching past at the salute. Their commander knew that I had fought against his country ten years before, and this was his generous reception.

The infantry marched by in perfect order, using the high German step, each company led by its officers. The cavalry passed at a trot, as did the artillery and mountain-battery. All were spick-and-span, the guns clean and bright, and the horses and mules in good fettle. I am not a professional soldier, and I do not much believe in the manœuvres of the barrack-yard as a test of efficiency in modern warfare; but, so far as I could judge, the troops I saw were likely to be a good match for any that they were likely to meet.

After I had complimented them to their commander, I inquired what he thought of the Bulgarian army.

"It is well organised and well drilled," he answered, "but the Bulgarians have no stomach for the attack."

If I am to judge of the Bulgarian regular troops by

the Comitadjis, I should think this a just criticism. But it is the idlest exercise in the world to form an opinion of the relative valour of forces which have never met on the open field.

I dined with Hisni Pasha that night. The governor was also present, and so was the Parisian "miller." It was evident that this gentleman was Kirk-Kilissi's show townsman. "You think we are remote and barbarous, but here is the kind of citizen we can turn out when we try!"

Among the officers invited was a captain of artillery, named Sadik, who was introduced to me as a painter. I expressed my interest, and his friends insisted on sending to his quarters for some specimens of his work. Two of them were beautifully executed paintings of flowers on silk, and Captain Sadik made me accept them as a souvenir.

I found out afterwards that drawing and painting are much cultivated in Turkish schools. The old prohibition of human and animal figures has been silently discarded, and I have seen some very good work, both at Monastir and Constantinople.

I had been accompanied to Kirk-Kilissi by two gendarmes—protectors according to the authorities, spies according to my dragoman and European opinion in general. As I drove off in the grey dawn four mounted artillerymen, under a corporal, drew up alongside. They had been sent by the commandant to escort me back to Adrianople. Not spies on this occasion, I may be allowed to think.

Such was my first experience of real Turkey, set down exactly as it happened. I had gone into one of the least-known parts of the empire, far from the railway, where consuls and correspondents hardly ever come, where there are no Europeans to please or to offend. I have described what I found. I know not what impression it may make on others. I know what impression it made on me.

When we halted once more at the little wayside coffee-house, I renewed my acquaintance with its two cats; but I did not again call the fierce Angora the Moslem, nor its mild companion the Christian.

Kirk-Kilissi had shown me the other side of the shield.

## CHAPTER V

### THE VILAYET OF ADRIANOPLE

A Bulgarian Commercial Agent—The art of cross-examination—  
A Jewish school—Persian literature—On the trail of the  
Comitadjis—Romeo and Juliet—A Turkish atrocity—The cost  
of liberation.

AFTER my return to Adrianople I was taken by Major Samson to call on Mr. Stoileff, the Bulgarian Commercial Agent.

The international position of the Principality presents one of those tangles of technical legalism which are dear to the diplomatic mind.

The Turkish Sultan is supposed to be the suzerain of Bulgaria proper. Eastern Rumelia, which is, by this time, as fully united with the rest as Yorkshire is with England, is technically Turkish soil, and its inhabitants are "subjects" of the Sultan. It was the hope of the Comitadjis to "Rumelise" Macedonia right down to the sea. They claimed—their writers claim for them—that they had established a government *de facto*, by terrorism, a State within the State, and if they could wear out or exterminate the Greeks and Moslems they anticipated that "Europe" would accept the *fait accompli*, and tacitly permit the incorporation of the conquered vilayets with the Principality.

It is in deference to the fictions of international law that the Bulgarian Ministers abroad are called "Diplomatic Agents," and their Consuls "Commercial Agents."

I found it the general opinion that I was in duty bound to call on these Agents wherever I found them, and let them talk to me. I do not know how many other official persons I was not expected to listen to in the same way—Rumanian and Servian Consuls, Austrian and Russian Civil Agents, French and Italian officers, English Financial Commissioners—it seemed to be the recognised duty of a traveller to pass his whole time in drinking in official statements from official lips.

If I neglected my duty in this respect I can only plead that my time was limited, that I was in search of facts and ocular evidence, and that I consider it unprofitable to argue with people who are officially bound not to let themselves be convinced.

However, I consented to call on Mr. Stoileff, and the reader shall hear how I got on.

The Bulgarian Agent was, of course, most friendly. The Bulgarians are more English in their manners than the Greeks, and to this fact I attribute part of their popularity in England.

But he was evidently on his guard. His first words showed me that he was aware that I had come from Athens, and that I was going back there. On this footing we met, and to me, as to a recognised adversary, he expounded the following case:

"The Bulgarians of the Principality have nothing whatever to do with the Macedonian bands. It is a purely Macedonian movement.

"In 1903 the bands did not attack a single village, but solely the Turkish armed forces."

I asked why, in that case, the Greeks came into the field.

"The Greeks took arms to assist the Turks."

Mr. Stoileff went on to refer to the death of Captain Melas. According to him, this officer was murdered by his own followers for the sake of the money he had about him. It is unfortunate that this version of the case is not borne out by the Bulgarian

apologist: "A few skirmishes<sup>1</sup> have none the less taken place (notably one in which Captain Melas was killed)." It has been confirmed by no one else.

The Archbishop of Castoria naturally came in for severe treatment.

"He appeared before a monastery in which some insurgents were besieged by Turkish troops, and told them he would guarantee their safety if they surrendered. They laid down their arms, and were massacred to the last man."

The following remarks are more instructive, and I have italicised one statement which was afterwards corroborated by the peasants themselves:

"There are many peasants, Bulgarians by speech, but Greek by religion. *They have no desire to join Greece or Bulgaria.* Even those who are undoubtedly Greeks do not want to be annexed to Greece, because they dread having to contribute to the debt and the taxes of the kingdom. In particular, they object to the tax on sugar."

So the Folk War has been over a question of sugar. I believe the Principality is much freer from debt than Greece, but I fear the peasant's preference is more likely to depend on the comparative proximity and ferocity of the Greek or Bulgarian band than on these calculations of political economy.

I asked Mr. Stoeileff what was the programme of his Government in the matter. He answered:

"The Great Powers must take entire control of Macedonia. The people must be told that they are Macedonians. Macedonia must be made a neutral State."

"What do you mean by a neutral State?" I inquired, glancing at the portrait of Prince Boris, which occupied a place of honour on the wall. "Do you mean an independent kingdom?"

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.* between Greeks and Turks. *Macedonia*, by H. N. Brailsford, p. 215.

"Or a republic," was the swiftly given response. "Whatever the people wish themselves."

I think there is not very much doubt as to what the people will "wish themselves," by the time the Comitadjis have done with them. They will "wish" to be Bulgarians. They will "wish" to join their brethren under the sway of Prince Ferdinand. And with that contingency in sight, it is distinctly better that Macedonia should be a republic than a kingdom.

I have no wish to be hard on Mr. Stoileff. I may have made a mistake in going to see him. I had no sympathy, I never can have sympathy, with the expansion of Bulgaria or any other country at the expense of any nationality or individual that does not wish to be incorporated with it. Governments must, unhappily, rest on compromise, and small minorities must suffer in any scheme of things. But the Bulgarians have no majority in Macedonia, and the means they have used to create one have demonstrated their unfitness to have the government of even an alien dog. With that feeling in my mind, I could only treat the Bulgarian Agent as a hostile witness. In my opinion, he would have been justified in declining to give evidence. If he decided to give it he should have given it straightforwardly. I considered that he was trifling with me, and my last question was in the nature of a cross-examiner's trap which the witness walked into. If I acted unfairly I apologise to Mr. Stoileff.

One of the most interesting elements in the population of Rumelia is the Jewish. The Jews who compose it are chiefly those whose ancestors were expelled from Spain, and, as is well known, they still use a Spanish dialect. I had neglected to visit the Jewish school at Kirk-Kilissi, and I made up for the omission by going to see the great institution established in Adrianople by the *Alliance Israélite* of Paris, containing upwards of 1,200 pupils.

Of these 763 receive their education free, and most



of the others pay less than a shilling a month. Of the poor ones 645 receive a suit of clothes and pair of shoes every year, and 342 have a hot meal every day at noon. The principal languages taught are French and Turkish, with Hebrew as part of the religious instruction, and German in the two senior classes. The annual budget of the school comes to the modest sum of £2,000, of which the greatest part is raised locally, the *Alliance Israélite* contributing £400. The Ottoman Government gives a small subscription, as does the Anglo-Jewish Association.

The thing that struck my imagination most, during my inspection of this noble foundation, was coming into one class-room and finding all the boys wearing the fez. It was the Hebrew lesson, and, since Hebrew is the sacred language, the scholars cover themselves while they study it.

They are right to do so. Well did Mohammed call them the People of the Book. For that book of theirs, to the scientific mind a collection of primitive folklore, of rudely edited chronicles, and socialistic poetry, has proved itself the mightiest book that any people has begotten. The Christian Testament is a supplement to it; the Koran is a commentary. It has been found mightier than all the books of the Hellenes put together. In Athens, under the shadow of the Parthenon, the descendants of Socrates and Pericles know more of David than Achilles, and write the name of the All-Father Yahveh instead of Zefs.

The Jews in Turkey are extremely poor: somehow, they do not prosper under Moslem rule, although they so much prefer it to Christian. In Salonika the Greeks are beating them on their own ground, and at their own trade of banking. Their schools owe a great deal to the French *Alliance Israélite*, and in the one I visited there were twelve teachers of the French language, seven of them trained in Paris.

This zeal of the French for the predominance of their language in the East is in striking contrast with

the apathy shown by ourselves. In Constantinople our Consul, Mr. Waugh, took me to visit two schools. The first, founded and supported entirely by the English residents, trains about fifty boys in the English language, although I overheard the younger ones using Greek among themselves in the playground. The second, liberally financed by the Scotch Mission to the Jews, trains 450 boys and girls in the German language. Some of them speak German when they first come, no doubt, and others Spanish. But all of them speak German when they leave. English is taught in the school, as one subject, and the few pupils who remain on long enough really learn it, as they learn French, in the same time. But the school is a German school.

It is a highly charitable enterprise, charitable towards the Jews, and still more charitable towards the Germans. But when I mentioned what I had seen to our Ambassador he seemed to think it worth his attention, and the English public may some day think the same.<sup>1</sup>

I went to thank the Governor-General of Adrianople for the reception I had met with in his vilayet, and Major Samson introduced me. I found the Vali was a scholar, deeply versed in Persian literature. I had first learned the charm of Persian literature from a Persian poet, the professor of that language in Trinity College, Dublin. Under the influence of the subject, the present conversation became worthy of Unsari and Firdausi in the gardens of Ispahan.

His Excellency conveyed to me that the hour in which he had made my acquaintance was the most

<sup>1</sup> The English High School, referred to above, is in great need of further support, and subscriptions may be sent to A. C. Silley, Esq., Hon. Treasurer, or to A. T. Waugh, Esq., at the British Consulate. The British Government does nothing to promote British interests in this direction (a similar school at Tangier has just been allowed to close its doors), but Chambers of Commerce interested in the trade of the Levant would find the endowment of such schools the soundest of investments.

pleasurable in a long and laborious life, but that all his joy had been changed into mourning by the intelligence that I was to quit his capital on the morrow.

I replied that I had come out to examine into troubles, and that it was because his administration had rendered his vilayet so happy that I was leaving it so soon.

Major Samson was inspired with the beautiful remark that I was like the sea-bird that follows the storm.

The reader must pardon these digressions. They should serve to remind him that the Thousand Nights and a Night are still a part of life in Rumelia. Be not too impatient with the ways of Fairyland.

There are a few Bulgars in Adrianople, but the prevailing element in the town is Turkish. I learned there was some ill-will between these Bulgars and the Greeks, dating from eight or ten years back, when the Bulgarians began persecuting the Greeks in the adjoining Principality. That date is most significant. For the whole terrorist movement against the Greeks, in and out of Macedonia, followed on their defeat in the war with Turkey. It may not be chivalrous to hit a man when he is down, but it is very good business. And the Folk are a practical people.

My next stopping-place after Adrianople was Dedeagatch, where the railway comes down to the sea-coast. The town is well built, after a recent fire. There is a broad boulevard planted with trees, and a general air of prosperity and neatness. From the beach there is a glorious view of capes and islands, and the little harbour was crowded with sailing-boats of quaint design, such boats as may have conveyed Agamemnon, with all his men, to Asia, in the most famous war of all the wars that have been waged between the West and East.

At the station I was met by a kavass on the part of the authorities—another spy! He took me to the Konak, where I found the mutessarif, this time a bey. The Greeks of the town—and the town is mainly Greek—reported that he was amiable, but not energetic.

He told me that the Comitadjis had started work in his sandjak. There is a thin line of Bulgarian villages stretching southward from the Bulgarian frontier almost to the sea—the valley of the Maritza—and along this line the bands were beginning to creep.

Now the Maritza does not flow through any part of Macedonia. It flows through the vilayet of Adrianople, known to history as Thrace. This liberating movement, therefore, should have no connection with the other. It should be a purely Thracian movement. Its object should be to teach the inhabitants that they are Thracians, and to convert the country into a neutral state, not an independent kingdom, but a republic or whatever the people wish themselves. At present the majority of them wish to be Turkish subjects, and most of the others wish to be Hellenes. The Comitadjis will change all that.

One night, just before my arrival, there was a Bulgarian wedding in a village a short way inland, in which three-fourths of the inhabitants are Bulgars and the rest Turks. The Turks, in their quarter, listened to the rejoicings, and among the discharges of firearms let off in honour of the occasion their ears caught a sound which told them that loaded cartridges were being fired as well as blank. A messenger was despatched to the mutessarif in Dedeagatch with the tidings, and the mutessarif showed all the energy required. Swiftly and silently a body of troops arrived on the scene. They found in the village a band of half-a-dozen Comitadjis, most of whom were shot down, while one or two escaped. Among the killed was one in peasant dress whose hands and feet betrayed, by the tenderness of

the skin, that he was not a peasant—in all probability an officer of the Bulgarian army.

Such was the story told me by the governor, and told me independently in the town. An everyday incident of life in Rumelia. Of course the governor ought to have instructed the troops to take the men alive. He ought to have given them a legal trial, with a jury containing a few Bulgarians, and a Russian Consul looking on to see fair play. And in the improbable event of a verdict against them for carrying arms without a licence, he should have let them off with a small fine, or a few weeks' imprisonment as first-class misdemeanants. All that will be done when Thrace is reformed. But meanwhile, one gathers that the Turkish Government understands the people with whom it has to deal, and that even an ease-loving governor gets on pretty well without the assistance of the Powers.

The Government kavass, or spy, continued to accompany my steps; and it is fair to remark that in Rumelia every consul is attended by his own kavass when he takes his walks abroad. I led him straight from the Konak to the Greek Consulate, where I found the Greek Archbishop. Afterwards he followed me to my hotel, where I dismissed him; and he went meekly away, and was seen no more.

The same night the Chief of Police, calling at the Archbishop's Palace, inquired if his Eminence knew who I was. But he had come there about another matter, and the Archbishop believed that the question was only put out of natural curiosity about a stranger.

The Archbishop told me this the next day, in the train going to Xanthe. His Eminence got in with me, and on the way we were joined by the Archbishop of Xanthe, by a Turkish officer in command of the soldiers guarding the railway, and by a Jewish merchant.

In Rumelia Archbishops are rather thick upon the ground. The first result of the Turkish conquest was

to add to the importance of the Christian hierarchy. Every Bishop transformed himself into a Metropolitan and Archbishop. The traveller through this country must return to England with the feeling that ordinary Bishops are hardly worth his notice, and even Primates are ordinary men.

But I have to explain the business which brought the Turkish Chief of Police to see the Greek Archbishop, because it threw another unexpected light on Turkish rule. The Archbishop told me the story without the least idea how it would strike an English mind.

He said that the Turks, by which he meant the Moslems, were guilty of turning the heads of Christian girls by means of flattery and presents, in order to obtain them as wives. If he had been an English Comitadji writer, of course he would have said that the Turks were in the habit of stealing and ravishing Christian girls; but, being merely a Greek Archbishop, he probably told the truth. To turn the head of a Christian girl by praising her charms and offering her jewellery, in the hope of marrying her, is a crime not unknown in "Europe," but our laws treat it with astonishing laxity. In Rumelia it is a serious matter, and the Chief of the Police took prompt action. He warned the Archbishop of what was happening, or had happened—I rather gathered that the misguided girl had already fled to her Moslem lover—and the Archbishop resolved to save her. She was brought back—as I understood, without her consent—married on the spot to a Christian youth selected for her by the Archbishop, and the newly wedded pair were now in the train on their way to Salonika under his Eminence's vigilant guardianship.

And why, the reader may ask, as I asked, did the authorities show all this zeal? Because, if the unfortunate lovers had been allowed to wed, "the Greeks would have been excited against the Turks." Fear of their Christian subjects moved the Turkish

tyrants to restore this infatuated girl to her friends.

Shall I recall the words of the kind-hearted governor of Kirk-Kilissi?—"It is very difficult to direct that department were are the different and hostiles inhabitants." The Young Turks now have the task in hand, and one can only hope that the cordial feelings which prevail for the moment will soften the inevitable conflicts later on.

As we were nearing Xanthe my fellow-passengers urged me very warmly to alight, and stay a night in the town. I objected that my *teskeri* (the inland passport above referred to) was only marked for Drama, and that the authorities might object. The Archbishop assured me that his word for me would be sufficient. I still hesitated, whereupon the Turkish officer was appealed to. He at once said that the Vali of Adrianople had sent an order down the line that I was to be at liberty to get out where I liked, and go where I pleased. It was a disconcerting moment for my Servian-Austrian-Montenegrin dragoman. The spy theory seemed to lose ground.

As it turned out, the Vali had acted incautiously. I came full upon a Turkish outrage, a typical case of Turkish oppression, and my dragoman took care that I should not overlook it.

The town, he informed me, soon after I had got to the hotel, was swarming with a number of distressed villagers who had just had their lands seized, and been turned out of their homes, by the "beys."

Every reader of Comitadji literature is familiar with the beys, known in our own happy country, and in Ireland, as the landlords. Their oppression is one of the chief causes of the Bulgarian intervention. They are, if possible, worse than the tax-gatherers, the pashas and the soldiers. If a "Grecomanic" peasant hesitates to join the liberators, the thought of deliverance from his bey decides him. "No rent" is a cry as popular in Rumelia as elsewhere.

I listened with a good deal of indignation to the dragoman's story, and not the less so that the victims of the outrage appeared to be Moslems. If even the Moslems were driven desperate it was clear there must be an end to Turkish rule.

I went out to see the victims. I found their carts—they owned carts—drawn up in an open space in the outskirts of the town. Their horses—they owned horses—were stabled hard by. I entered a house in which I found a number of women and children very well dressed—much better dressed than Irish women and children when I was last in the country parts of Ireland. I bestowed some small coins on the children; their mothers, who wore veils, refused to speak to me.

Then I went round to see the kaimakam. (Xanthe is only a *caza*, not a *sandjak*.)

The kaimakam, I had been told in the train, was "a very honest man." I had not yet heard a bad word against any Turkish governor, and, except in one place, I was not destined to do so. Greeks, Turks, and Bulgars alike seemed prejudiced in favour of their tyrants. They could not have read much Comitadji literature.

The kaimakam, who had had no notice of my coming, nor of my views and objects, received me civilly, and answered my questions without embarrassment. In any other country in the world a foreign traveller walking into the office of the local governor and proceeding to cross-question him about his affairs might have a rather rude reception. In Turkey it is a thing of course that the passing European should play the spy upon the Government, and tax its officers with their faults.

He told me that the dispute between these people and their landlords was of long standing. They were not natives of the district, but immigrants from elsewhere—I think he said from Greece—who had squatted on the beys' land. Some of them were gipsies. They



had been suffered to remain, but trouble had arisen through their pasturing their sheep and cattle—they owned sheep and cattle—on the ground required by the beys themselves. A law-suit had been carried on at Adrianople, and the judgment was a compromise. The Court decided that the gipsies might pasture their “big animals” (*grande bétaille*) but not their little animals. The squatters had disregarded the judgment, the beys had gone down and driven off the little animals, or impounded them, and the gipsies had thereupon abandoned their homes in dudgeon, and come into Xanthe to demand of the Government that it should find lands for them elsewhere. I gathered that the Government was going to do so.

Such was the explanation given me by the “very honest man.” I offer no opinion on its credibility. It has this in its favour, that he had not much time to invent it.

My dragoman continued the investigation on his own account while I was riding out to a monastery beautifully situated on the hill behind the town. He brought me the statement that four of the petitioners had been sent off to Adrianople in chains. The chains were a picturesque touch. That dragoman has missed his vocation. He ought to have been the author of a book on Macedonia. I cannot say off-hand what would happen to gipsies in England who defied the order of a court of law, but I think some precautions might be taken against their running away.

The dragoman further stated that he had met some of these men in the street. They shed tears, and he bestowed some money on them, which was duly debited to my account. I requested him to bring some of them to me, that I might question them myself; but he failed to do so. When we were safely out of the town, next day, he told me that the refugees had petitioned that I should write to the British Consul at Adrianople to ask his intervention; and I failed to do so.

Most Consuls and most foreign officers who have spent any time in Rumelia have learned to believe about one-tenth of the tales that are brought to them by the peasants. The Folk are not a truthful people, as their best friends confess. I heard of one Consul who had committed to memory the Bulgarian words for "The story you have just told me is not true." He used this phrase mechanically at the end of every tale of woe, and invariably found that it produced another and quite different version.

I do not say that the Rumelian peasants are naturally more prone to grumble and exaggerate than other peasants. There used to be a "tale" in Ireland of a peasant who was in the habit of waylaying English tourists at Killarney, and moving them to solid sympathy by pointing to his miserable cabin of loose stones and broken windows and ruined thatch. The cabin was truly miserable, and it was his property. But it was not his residence. It was, so to speak, his business premises, or rather his stock-in-trade. He lived in considerable comfort elsewhere.

The difference between the Rumelian peasant and other peasants is that he gets more encouragement and a wider audience. The missionaries, always a tender-hearted and injudicious class of men, are his sworn advocates. The subjects of Prince Ferdinand are less indifferent to his grievances than they pretend. Powerful monarchs show him more sympathy than they always extend to their own subjects. And his prosperity is the pressing care of a philanthropic country whose own peasants are still waiting for their three acres and a cow.

Now, that is the most serious outrage, or alleged outrage, on the part of Moslems that came under my direct observation while I was in the Turkish empire on the look-out for outrages. And it was perpetrated, if at all, on Moslems. It may justify the Powers in requiring the appointment of a Christian governor for

Thrace. If so, I should suggest the choice of an Irish resident magistrate.

By way of comparison, I give a sample of how the enemies of Turkey conduct their liberating mission. I took it down the same day in the office of the Commercial Company of Salonika, Limited :

"My name is Demetracopoulo. I am the cashier of the Company. Two years ago to-day the Bulgarians seized my brother. They seized him as he was going to his farm from a village. They carried him up to the mountains. They kept him two months. We paid £600."

When a thing like that is done by a private robber "Europe" blames it. When it is done by a robber who says he hates the Sultan, "Europe" praises it. That is the short history of this Folk War.

The Greek Consul at Xanthe invited me to dinner, and at his hospitable board we were joined by the Archbishop. His Eminence told me, with great glee, that a spy from the kaimakam had been watching his palace ever since my call there in the afternoon, but that he had "depisted" him—by what artifice I did not learn. The hospitable cleric had brought with him a bottle of excellent native wine, in which we drank patriotic toasts, and a bottle of scented brandy, twenty years old, which he gave me to take upon my journey.

I carried it to Drama and presented it to the British officers' mess. It considerably modified their Bulgarophile attitude, and I understood that they purposed cultivating the friendship of his Eminence of Xanthe.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE VILAYET OF SALONIKA

Drama—The reformed gendarmery—Professional jealousy—The mute  
—A British officer's evidence—My travelling companion—Bul-  
garian gratitude to England—The hero of Serres—Salonika—  
Other phases of the Folk War—Hilmi Pasha—European credulity  
—How Griva was liberated—Japan to the rescue.

DRAMA lies on the threshold of the artificial area falsely called Macedonia. As we have seen, the Bulgarian attack takes no notice of the border-line recognised by the Powers, and therefore I need not do so. The whole southern region from Constantinople to Salonika is admittedly Greek where it is not Moslem—Greek in language, Greek in religion, and Hellenist in aspiration. There are a number of Moslems of Bulgarian extraction, but they are of course as strongly opposed as the Turks, Greeks, Jews, or gipsies to a Bulgarian domination. There is a thin scattering of Exarchists in the rural districts. In the towns the Bulgarian population is hardly more numerous than the Jewish.

Drama, a town as ugly as Xanthe is beautiful, is the headquarters of the British officers who are engaged with the officers of the other five Powers in organising a gendarmery for service against the Greek and Bulgarian bands. This gendarmery is one of the remedies prescribed by Austria and Russia in the Mursteg programme of reforms for Macedonia. The foreign officers are not in command of it. Their

functions have been limited to ordering its equipment, providing barracks and posts, drilling the men, and advising the Turkish authorities where and how to use them.

It is confessed on every hand that this experiment has so far proved a failure. The failure is attributed by the officers themselves to lack of numbers, lack of authority on their part, and lack of good-will on the part of the Government..

The head of all these officers, and therefore the person responsible to Europe for the success or failure of the gendarmery, was the Italian General Degiorgis, whose recent death makes me desire to avoid any personal criticism. I did not meet this officer, who was warmly, and I am sure sincerely, praised to me by his English comrades.

I saw, however, with my own eyes, that the gendarmery were equipped with sky-blue uniforms of conspicuous and unworkmanlike appearance. I also saw—and no one drew my attention to this—that the Turkish authorities had of their own accord organised a corps of chasseurs or scouts for the express purpose of dealing with the bands, and that these men were dressed in a workmanlike uniform resembling khaki in colour.

In the face of this one fact I found some difficulty in believing that the Sultan of Turkey was secretly anxious to prolong a civil war which cost him immense sums of money, and threatened to cost him three provinces; or that that war could be terminated most easily by increasing the numbers of the gendarmery and the authority of its foreign officers.

While in Rumelia I was continually told that the efforts of General Degiorgis and his staff were secretly thwarted by the authorities, and that they felt their work to be a pretence. It is ordinarily believed that when a man finds himself in a false position he is justified in tendering his resignation. The courage and perseverance of so many officers in clinging to

their uncomfortable posts in the face of so much opposition are remarkable ; and it is not surprising that the Sultan has honoured them with decorations which most of them, except the English, have accepted.

The distribution and conduct of the foreign officers throw some light on the motives which have inspired this reform. The Russian officers work on a line extending northwards from Salonika, and they signalled their arrival by telling the Hellenist peasants that if they would only call themselves Bulgarians all would be well with them. I shall produce first-hand evidence of this hereafter. The Austrian officers have naturally preferred the district which borders on their own country, or rather that Turkish province (Bosnia) which is being administered by Austria, with results of which we came upon an example at Gravosa. The Italians are stationed along the frontier of Albania. There is a tiny colony of Albanians in Sicily, dating from the days of Scanderbeg, and the Italian Government has been thoughtful enough to select an officer of that extraction, in order that the Albanians might realise how well their countrymen flourish under Italian rule.

These are the three Powers which take the greatest interest in Rumelia. The Germans have shrewdly confined themselves to the work of drill and instruction in the town of Salonika, and the German Ambassador is not unpopular at Yildiz, nor does German enterprise suffer much in Asia Minor. The French and English look after the Greek districts of Serres and Drama, where their impartiality and zeal have made them universally unpopular.

The British officers partook the opinion that the gendarmery did not receive fair play as compared with the troops. But the question in my mind is whether, if they were in command of the troops, they would consider this a fault or a merit on the part of the civil power. I subsequently received from Hilmi

Pasha, the viceroy of the three vilayets, a most ably written report, made by a French officer to his own chief, Colonel Vêrand, describing the cutting off of a party of Comitadjis by a force of 150 soldiers and 9 police.<sup>1</sup> It was sent to me merely as illustrating the manner in which the Government carried out its task, and the character of its enemies. But, in reading it, I was struck by these two sentences :

"The dispositions taken to catch the Comitadjis were excellent, and quickly executed : they were conceived and executed by the lieutenant of gendarmery, by the *confession* of the officers themselves who were present.

"The lieutenant of gendarmery, Salih Agha, was, by the *confession* of every one, the hero of this encounter."

The significant word here is "confession" (*aveu*). The worthy French officer is saying, with pardonable pride, "Our man did best, as even our rivals admit."

This jealousy between the military and the police is not peculiar to Rumelia. It is found everywhere in our own dominions. In Nigeria it had reached such a pitch that the officer commanding at Lokoja told me, within a few hours of my arrival, that he could not answer for the behaviour of his men if the police were permitted to come near them ; and one of my first official acts was to arrange a truce which satisfied everybody—except the Commissioner of Police. I purged the police force of some men whom he had enlisted in it after they had been dismissed from the army for bad conduct. I left my police orderly at home whenever I visited the camp. When I made a tour through my province I took only soldiers with me, lest the presence of police should lead to friction. I formally thanked the officer and his men for the manner in which they had assisted me in one affair of some peril. The soldiers themselves were thoroughly friendly, and

<sup>1</sup> Given in full at p. 308.

the black sergeant-major carried me over rivers on his back. Nevertheless, I continued to be harassed by petty displays of professional jealousy from the military headquarters, and on one occasion the officer left in command had to come to me privately and beg me to cancel an official correspondence in which he had placed himself gravely in the wrong.

Now, while in Rumelia, I was shown a confidential report by a military attaché of one of the Embassies, full of complaints against the manner in which the Turkish troops were being favoured at the expense of the gendarmerie. From first to last the reflection did not seem to have occurred to the writer that any part of this might be due to no more occult cause than professional jealousy. I suggest that by creating this rival force, and launching it into the troubled whirlpool of Rumelia, the Powers have made a mistake which must hinder rather than help the work of pacification.

The moment I entered the English officers' quarters I was most hospitably made at home, and I stayed there two days. Unfortunately, I found only two officers there, one of whom had to leave immediately on a tour through his district. My remaining host was Major Nye, and from him I gathered a good deal of interesting information.

It is needless to say that I found him zealous and free from bias. It has often been said that English Liberals, as soon as they go abroad, become Conservatives; and it is not less true that those who at home would be firm pillars of aristocracy and the landed interest, no sooner find themselves in a foreign country than they are apt to develop sentiments which would command enthusiasm in a Radical meeting.

That is a general observation suggested, not by my intercourse with Major Nye, of whose political opinions I am ignorant, but by my observation of a great number of English officials in Turkey and elsewhere.



The mutessarif of Drama, whose title had been affectionately abbreviated to "mute," did not seem in very good odour with our officers. The "mute," it appeared, did not approve of the reformed gendarmery, and neglected it, preferring to employ the troops. The "mute" was also guilty of sowing distrust between the population and their protectors. He had refused permission to the Greeks of Drama to form a band—I mean a musical band—and given as his reason that the English officers objected to it—a story which the Greeks were credulous enough to believe. A police officer, dismissed without apparent cause, was told that his dismissal had been demanded by the English officers. These Machiavellian tactics had brought him into disgrace for a time. But Fairyland is not as Europe, and the "mute" had since been pardoned, and asked to dine at the mess.

I rather pitied the "mute," whose feelings about the foreign officers forced upon his country were natural enough. And my pity was changed to admiration when I called upon him. He explained to me that, by the precepts of his religion, he was bound to love men of other creeds more than his fellow-believers. Great as is my respect for Islam, I confess that this surprised me. The "mute" did not return my call. I trust that I have not taken too severe a revenge for his discourtesy.

Major Nye contradicted the report that the Russian officers favoured the Bulgarians. It was the contradiction of a loyal comrade, and I will not attempt to discount its weight further.

He described the country generally as being in a state of weltering anarchy. There were murders constantly committed on both sides, and both sides mutilated their victims. The bands were masters of the country, and membership of one was regarded as a high privilege. Murders were committed by the young men as a sort of title to admission. Some of the outrages in the town of Drama had been committed

with this object. A Bulgarian youth had entered the town and hurled a bomb through the window of some Greek resort, in order to qualify himself as a Comitadji.

This was a new and instructive light on the situation. It seemed to fit in with what I learned later on from a Bulgarian source, that the bands have become associations of blackmailers, living on the unfortunate villagers, and practising on them worse oppressions than those which formed the pretext of the initial revolt.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless the Folk War retains its national character. The Comitadji leaders are too shrewd to talk about Macedonians and neutral States. They appeal to the patriotism of the Bulgars, and they benefit by it. Major Nye told me of a Bulgarian schoolmistress, in private life a gentle, well-educated young woman, who acts as a messenger for one of these bands, and implicitly obeys the orders of its chief. The major asked her how she was able to bring herself to assist such monsters, and she explained frankly that when her patriotic feelings were aroused she could not refuse.

In Major Nye's opinion these patriotic sentiments have been implanted in the peasants by the Comitadji chiefs. "Their ideas are those given them by the band leaders."

And here, it seems to me, we have the true test of nationality. The young schoolmistress, sacrificing her ordinary habits and her sense of right and wrong, at the bidding of a robber and a manslayer, because he calls on her in the name of Bulgaria, is a Bulgarian indeed. The slow-witted peasant, whom we shall meet later, speaking a cross between Servian and Bulgarian,

<sup>1</sup> According to a recent telegram, the Bulgarian Commercial Agent has been insulted in the Serres district by a lieutenant of the Comitadji chief, Sandansky, and the Bulgarian Government has demanded reparation from that of Turkey! Under these circumstances the English apologists of Sandansky and the Internal Organisation will soon find themselves alone,

calling himself a Patriarchist, and sending his children to the Greek school; willing to welcome any band that promises to drive away the Moslem landlord, but most unwilling to go on paying the same rent to his liberator; that man may be bullied or scourged or tortured into calling himself a Bulgarian or a Greek, according to the will of his tormentor, but the Folk State has no claim on his allegiance, neither has he much claim on Hellas.

At Drama I was joined by a travelling companion, Mr. Kalopathakes, an honorary professor of the University of Athens, and correspondent of the since defunct *Tribune*. Mr. Kalopathakes had been asked to accompany me on my journey by the Press Bureau of the Greek Foreign Office, but his engagements only permitted him to cover the part between Drama and Monastir. The son of a Greek father and an English mother, Mr. Kalopathakes was peculiarly qualified to act as an intermediary between the Greek and English publics, and I felt it a great advantage to have the benefit of his moderate and impartial judgment. He happened to be a Protestant, and he discovered that the evil influence of the Folk War had reached even the tiny Protestant community in the town of Drama. That community has hitherto consisted of Bulgars and Greeks worshipping together. Now, he told me, the Bulgars, who are in a majority, have expelled the Greeks, and refused to let them use the common meeting-place. If, as is probable, this community receives any dole from American or English sources, it would seem worth while for its patrons to look into the matter.

Major Nye took me out partridge-shooting, but the partridges proved as shy as the Comitadjis. We carried revolvers—a precaution which a British officer does not recommend needlessly. Indeed, we passed in sight of the spot where the Bulgarians seized Colonel Elliott.

Colonel Elliott's rescue of himself was a feat which



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would have earned the Victoria Cross had he been rescuing another. His captors were leading him off under the eyes of his own gendarmes, and he remained perfectly cool and collected until they produced a cord to bind his hands. Then he suddenly drew out his revolver, shot four of them, and effected his escape. The Comitadji Press may condemn this sacrifice of brave lives, but a jury might find extenuating circumstances.

The authors of this unsuccessful exploit have not lost heart. In Drama I heard that a reward of £1,000 had been offered for the murder of one of our officers, and that a band was being formed on purpose to earn the money. It was believed, and not only by the Bulgarians, that such a *coup* would help on the work of liberation, by striking our attention, and making England more active on behalf of the reforms, like the spur driven into the horse's side.

No one can say this expectation has not been justified by our past action. The worst of the Bulgarian outrages, the bombs of Salonika, were inspired by the anarchist reasoning that "Europe" can be shocked or terrorised into bestowing Macedonia upon the Folk, against the will of the Moslem and Greek majority. And every step which the Powers have taken to weaken the authority of the Turkish Government is a concession to that reasoning.

There is only one authority strong enough to put a stop to the civil war in its dominions. And instead of encouraging and aiding it to take the measures which are clearly indispensable, the Powers have been hampering and thwarting it. They have placed restrictions on its action, they have set spies on its agents, they have given moral encouragement to the authors of the war, and they have done so with the deliberate intention of extending the area of "Christendom" at the expense of Islam.

The only doubt which now discourages the Comitadjis is the doubt whether the contemplated partition

of Turkey will enure to their benefit or that of Austria. The Austrian dominion is more dreaded than the Turkish by Bulgarians and Greeks alike. In the whole of Rumelia I met only two men—and I questioned very many—who were willing to exchange the Sultan for his Apostolic Majesty. The threat of an Austrian occupation was the only argument which visibly impressed the Bulgars, and caused a Bulgarian prelate to remind me of Gladstone's famous warning: "Hands off, Austria!"

The next town to Drama on my itinerary was Serres, but as it is another Greek stronghold, and Mr. Kalopathakes had just visited it, I did not think it necessary to stay there. I got out for a few moments at the station, and talked with some of the inhabitants, from whom I learned that the town was in a state of great excitement on account of the trial of two Greeks, one of them a band leader named Panyotti. The circumstances were given to me later.

It must be remembered that the Turkish authorities have been condemned for favouring the Greeks, and the Greeks for taking arms "to assist the Turks."<sup>1</sup>

Panyotti was a subject of the Hellenic kingdom, and his trial, in Greek opinion, was not a fair one. The evidence against him did not justify a conviction. The Greek Minister in Constantinople went to the Porte, the Porte promised to delay the execution, the Porte broke its promise, Panyotti was hanged, and the Greek population of Serres closed their shops in protest.

One Greek gentleman, the holder of a doctorial degree, though whether legal, medical, or philosophical I am not aware, expatiated on these events to me as a flagrant case of injustice and malignity on the part of the Turkish Government towards Greece.

"There was no evidence against Panyotti," he

<sup>1</sup> The words used to me by the Bulgarian Agent, above.

insisted, "but because he was a Greek they hanged him. Wasn't it barbarous?"

I agreed that it wore that appearance. My friend went on to say:

"But Panyotti was a hero. The other man with him was like a stone through fear. But Panyotti spoke out to the people. The Turks let him speak, and he denounced them. Wasn't it heroic of him?"

I thought it was also a little chivalrous of the Turks. My friend added, with triumph:

"He said: 'I, Panyotti, have killed sixteen of those Turkish dogs, and I call upon every one of you to kill a hundred!'"

"But if it was true that he had killed sixteen Turks, doesn't it give the Turkish authorities some excuse for executing him?" I asked.

The doctor looked round with a start, smiled, nodded his head, and responded:

"Yes—but wasn't he a hero?"

The story of Panyotti should redeem the character of the Greeks in the eyes of Europe, the Europe which deems hatred of the Turk a greater merit than love of freedom. The sentiment is one which I find it easier to understand in a Pobiedonostzeff than in an English Liberal writer.

It should also redeem them from the charge of having taken up arms to assist the Turks. And yet there may be readers who will think that Hellenism has found nobler exponents than Panyotti and his learned admirer.

The whole story reminds me curiously of the attitude of the Irish on the subject of the Phoenix Park murders. Till the authors were discovered the Nationalist Press denounced the crime, even going as far as to hint that it was the work of Orangemen aiming to discredit the national cause. When the murderers were arrested their innocence was firmly asserted and their conviction treated as a travesty



of justice. On their confession and execution, their portraits were put up in every peasant's hut as those of heroes and martyrs.

At Salonika I paid off my many-countried dragoman and engaged another found for me by the Greek Consulate. He was, as I have said, a Greek driven from Bulgaria as the result of the outrages described elsewhere. Naturally he had not much sympathy with the Folk in Macedonia, nor much belief in the theory of the neutral State, *not* an independent kingdom, in which Bulgarians and Greeks were to lie down together like lambs.

His attitude towards the Turkish authorities was exactly like that of his Slave predecessor. He took much pleasure in insulting the police who came to meet me at the various railway-stations, and offered me their services. They were all "spies." He rejoiced at Voden, where the kaimakam had contemplated offering me hospitality, and had gone so far as to kill a lamb, because the Greek Archbishop had been beforehand with him, and had, so to speak, cut me out. At some other place he was mollified by the intelligence, which he brought me, that the authorities "knew I was much more important than a Consul." The Vali of Monastir, on the other hand, had the misfortune to offend him by not returning my call for a week.

These prejudices aside, I found him trustworthy, zealous, and attentive. The Greeks are not supposed to make good servants: an Athenian friend advised me not to take one. I disregarded that advice, and I did not regret it.

The town of Salonika is rapidly taking on a European character. There are trams, good hotels, some fair streets, and a suburb elegantly built. There is a music-hall, and a municipal casino and garden. Its natural advantages are remarkable, and

the view of Mount Olympus, crowned with snows, across the sea is more magnificent than anything that Naples has to show. The interesting antiquities I had no time to visit.

The Greek community is the most prosperous, though not the most numerous. There are a few Bulgarians in the town, who seem to enjoy the exclusive interest of the American Board of Missions. But the Principality has its eye on the great Macedonian port. I have referred to the anarchist demonstrations, and will say no more about them. A more innocent plot was narrowly frustrated by the Greeks shortly before my arrival. The Bulgarians were in treaty for a large building on the sea front, meaning to convert it into an hotel, and placard it with the name *Grand Hôtel de Bulgarie* in letters big enough to be read by every vessel entering the port. Greater Powers employ similar means of expansion, and no one need laugh at the Bulgarians for taking a leaf out of an Imperial book; but the Greeks heard just in time. They stepped in, offered a higher price, and secured this bit of Macedonia for Hellas.

I visited the Greek gymnasium, or, as we should say, the high school, and found it, as I found all the Greek schools in Rumelia, swarming with pupils, and officered by teachers of superior intelligence and evident keenness. Where the work of education is inspired by patriotism it can hardly be otherwise. The boys themselves are not much less keen than their masters. I went into the science class and found the master mixing chemicals. I expressed the hope that he was not teaching his pupils to make dynamite, and the ripple that went round the class showed me that the boys knew French better than I had suspected. The Greek bands, I am assured, have never stooped to dynamite.

I went on to the Greek orphanage, one of the finest buildings I saw in the Orient; but it is too magnificent

for its use ; I should have been better pleased to see less marble and more orphans. On the other hand, I found the education more practical and sensible than I had expected. I found orphans making shoes, orphans making clothes, and orphans making desks and benches for the new law school which the Turkish Government is setting up in Salonika. It was a happy thought to place this order with a Christian orphanage, and I understood that the order came directly from the Government.

The orphans were from all parts of Macedonia. I cannot forget one little Koutzo-Vlach of eleven, who was planing away as though he never could leave off. While I was listening to a musical performance I caught sight of a Greek profile as pure as those upon the frieze of the Parthenon. The lad turned out to come from Chalcidice, a peninsula whose blood is as Greek as that of the Islands. And yet the Folk War is going into Chalcidice. The Russians have long had a monastery on Mount Athos. Now the Bulgarians have planted one, and I have already related the story of the Bulgarian labourers slaughtered upon the threshold of the district.

Many of these orphans were victims of worse crimes on the part of the Bulgars—worse inasmuch as their parents had been killed in their homes, whereas the Bulgarian miners were invaders.

Some of the little fellows told me their stories. One was the son of a priest who had been first tortured and then killed. With what feelings in his heart must that child grow up! Who shall teach him that he and his father's torturers are Macedonians and brethren? Who shall unite them in a republic, presided over by some Apostol or Sarafoff?

The Folk War has extended into the libraries and museums. Rival archæologists, sinking their science in their patriotism, battle over classical and mediæval

history. The Greeks claim Aristotle as a spiritual William the Conqueror who annexed Macedonia to Hellas, in the person of Alexander; and the Bulgars retort that Aristotle was a Bulgarian. In time we may expect to hear that so was Agamemnon, and that a Bulgarian poet sang the deeds of the Bulgarian Achilles against the Turkish town of Troy.

A German lady, whom I met in Salonika, told me that on a farm of hers near Kilkish the Bulgars had buried stones, bearing Bulgarian inscriptions, by a fountain, with a view to their being dug up later, and exhibited as evidence that Kilkish was Bulgarian in prehistoric times.

To me such arguments are childish, but I seem to be alone in my opinion. These questions are sooner or later settled by the big battalions, but diplomatists take pleasure in devising plausible excuses for the big battalions to march, and among their excuses ethnological ones are now the most approved. The fashion was first set by the Germans, and the Greeks have fallen victims to it. They have placed their trust in Thucydides, and forgotten Nicias. Their literary victory has blinded them to their military defeat. They have been conquering ancient Macedon, while the Folk have been conquering Macedonia.

His Excellency Hussein Hilmi Pasha, Inspector-General of the Macedonian vilayets, has been so much written about that my reference to him shall be as brief as was our intercourse.

He is in supreme direction of the Government forces engaged in trying to put down the Folk War. In addition, he actively superintends the government of the country, receiving complaints from a dozen distant cazas, sending his orders into the remotest villages, and counting every flock of sheep that shuns by some mysterious instinct the tax-gatherer's eye.

But those are not his most important functions. His principal duty is to preside over the workings of

the Commission appointed by the Powers to assist him, to listen to their suggestions, to inquire into their accusations, and to meet with urbanity all the criticisms with which the Turkish authorities are favoured by Commissioners, Consuls, gendarmery officers, missionaries, charitable agents, newspaper correspondents, and passing travellers such as myself.

He is expected to put aside all other matters pressing for his attention as soon as we arrive, to welcome us as friends, and to enter upon an elaborate vindication of himself and his subordinates, which we receive with silent scepticism, if not with contradiction. By this time he should be able to make the proper speech mechanically, like an actor who has been playing the same part night after night.

Our Consul-General, Mr. Lamb, was good enough to take me to the Inspector-General's, and to introduce me on the same footing as my numerous predecessors.

I hastened to explain to Hilmi Pasha that I had no desire to enter into these general questions. I told him that having had, myself, to administer an unsettled province not so very much smaller than Macedonia, I was already able to appreciate some of the difficulties of his task, and felt more inclined to offer him sympathy than criticism. His Excellency seemed at first incredulous ; it must have been strange in his experience of European visitors. I then said I should be pleased to have a few facts, throwing light on the state of the country, and he gave me some.

The one which struck me most forcibly, as bearing on our business in Rumelia, was this. Hilmi Pasha had stationed a body of troops in a certain village which formed a sort of junction through which the Christian bands—I rather think, Bulgarian—came and went, the object being to prevent their passage. In due course the villagers came to a representative of

Great Britain, or some other of the Powers, and made complaint that the soldiers were ill-treating them. The Power approached requested the Sultan's minister to remove the soldiers in consequence. The order was obeyed. Not very long after a band was cut to pieces in the neighbourhood by Turkish troops or gendarmes. On the body of one of the slain was found a letter written by the Comitadji leader to the people of the village, ordering them to go and pretend to some European official that they were suffering from the troops, so as to get them sent away.

It is in this manner that we have aided the Sultan to restore order in Rumelia.

On another occasion the Turkish troops, after destroying a Bulgarian band concealed in a village in the Monastir vilayet, exercised their well-known cruelties on the villagers. The villagers told the foreign officers, the officers told the commissioners, the commissioners told the Inspector-General, and no one believed the denial of the Turkish officers that any cruelties had been committed. A few months afterwards a letter was found on the body of another slain Comitadji, narrating the story of the encounter, and concluding with these words: "The soldiers went off after these proceedings without doing any harm to the villagers."<sup>1</sup>

If these letters are Turkish forgeries they are well forged. Equally skilful hands must have been engaged in drawing up the Instructions of the Internal Organisation, which directs the operations of the Comitadjis.

"Art. 2.—In all the villages the inhabitants, men, women, and children, must be brought, willingly or forcibly, to the capital of the vilayet, where they ought

<sup>1</sup> I first heard this story from Hilmi Pasha. I have since read the letter itself in *L'Agitation Bulgare en Turquie*, by S. Vittorio Ramon, p. 51.

to be made to go first to the Consulates, and then to the Vali, and protest against the acts of authority exercised by the bands during their stay in the villages."<sup>1</sup>

This is a very subtle move. The Bulgarian villagers are to protest against the Bulgarian bands. Why? In order that they may not be accused of connivance by the authorities. We shall see later that this is now the *mot d'ordre* of the propaganda.

The fourth article of these Instructions is a masterpiece. Indian Civil Servants know something about what can be done in the way of manufactured crimes and exquisite perjury, but here is something to make Bengal blush for its incompetence.

"Art. 4.—One ought especially to proceed, in no matter what village, to the assassination of *useless* or mischievous Christians, with the object of inculcating the bakdji, the kahya, the contractor or the bey, before the judicial commissions. Thus, solely to testify that the murder has been committed by such persons as the tyrants above mentioned, two of the villagers ought to be compelled to serve as witnesses conformably to the law.<sup>2</sup> The testimony should be given as if it were the expression of a profound personal conviction."<sup>3</sup>

The Comitadji has heard that Europe is about to reward his exertions by granting him the boon of Christian judges, and he is getting ready for them. Our judges cannot reject evidence given as if it were the expression of a profound personal conviction.

I quitted the presence of the Sultan's representative with a feeling of sincere pity for him. I do not think

<sup>1</sup> *L'Agitation Bulgare*, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Does this mean that they must feign conversion to Islam? Christian testimony against Moslems is received in Turkey much as we receive Bengali testimony against Englishmen, and on precisely the same grounds.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Agitation Bulgare*, p. 46.

any inducement that could be offered would tempt me to undertake the government of a Turkish province, with the emissaries of half a dozen more or less hostile Powers authorised to check and control my every move, and to thwart my best dispositions for the security of the country, on the complaint of well-drilled perjurers. What would the Viceroy of India, what would the humblest District Commissioner, say if he were required to discharge his functions under such conditions, and to apologise for his administration to every foreign traveller?

On my return to Salonika a few weeks later, the Inspector-General sent me some papers which I had asked him to furnish me with, throwing light upon his work from day to day; but I will not here anticipate their contents.

The German lady whom I have already referred to, and who is married to a Greek, told me that in her neighbourhood the Turks had formerly been guilty of great severities towards the peasants. She did not go into details, and it is against the rule I have adopted to rely on statements at second-hand. As it happened, I was to meet with hardly any direct evidence to the same effect. I can hardly doubt, however, that a good deal of oppression has been practised by ill-disposed Turks in various places; and it is, perhaps, the most striking evidence of the cruelty of the Bulgarian liberators, that wherever they have been their conduct seems to have effaced all memory of any previous sufferings from the Turks, and to have left the Macedonian peasant with kindly feelings towards his erstwhile tyrants. Of this I was about to have a remarkable illustration.

Desiring to come into touch with something more solid than official documents and generalities, I applied to the Greek Consulate to let me interview some actual witnesses. Mr. Contagouris, the Acting Consul, I found to be a man of scrupulous good faith, quite as



anxious as I was that I should not be deceived by fabricated evidence, and not at all disposed to shirk the fact that Macedonian peasants, whether "Bulgarophone" or "Grecomanic," are capable of exaggeration. When I asked him if he could procure me one of the Bulgarian flags said to be carried by the bands who are seeking to make Macedonia a "neutral State," he answered promptly:

"If I were to let it be known that you wanted such a flag the floor of the Consulate would be covered with them; but I could not guarantee their authenticity."

I quote that remark as showing the confidence which my Hellenic friends placed in me, and as justifying the answering confidence which I have placed in them.

This gentleman sent round three witnesses to my hotel. They told me their story through Mr. Kalopathakes, and, so far as I could judge, they told it truthfully. They had not much temptation to do otherwise. Their story had almost certainly been checked by the Greek Consul, and he had chosen them as trustworthy witnesses.

They were Demetrios, the *œconomos*, or archpriest, of the village of Griva, near Vodena (a town I was to visit), Christos Jannides, a tailor from the same place, and his orphan niece, a girl of fifteen. They were all related, and the first thing they told me was that twelve persons belonging to their three households had been murdered since the year 1903.

Griva, they said, was a Greek village, whose inhabitants for the most part spoke Bulgar, but belonged to the Patriarchate. They themselves spoke Greek, or Mr. Kalopathakes could not have understood them.

On October 13, 1902, the first Bulgarian band made its appearance in the village. It consisted of twenty-four men, under Apostol, a leader whose name has since acquired an evil notoriety. They came in by night, and were lodged in the house of a sympathiser. The next day they called a meeting of the villagers.

"They said"—I am now transcribing the evidence as I took it down—"they said first that all Christians are brothers, and must rise and fight the Turks.

"They then appointed a local government, with a president and secretary.

"I—(it is the priest who is speaking)—tried to avoid going to the meeting. I was dragged there by eight men.

"As I refused to take part, they bound me, threw me down and beat me, and said I must pay £5, and sign a paper adhering to the Exarch.

"Apostol said, 'I will do to you what I did to Papa Athanase, of Babion.' This was a priest whose head they had smashed in with a stone."

Others of the village notables were similarly treated. The witness Demetrios asked for time to get the money, escaped to the nearest Turkish authority, and appealed for protection, with the result that nine of the band were killed. That is, of course, the action that would be taken by any citizen of any country who was beaten or threatened by blackmailers. It is what Bulgarian apologists call "assisting the Turks."

It is most important to bear in mind that this incident took place before the open rising of 1903. Already the programme is perfectly well defined: "All Christians are brothers, but if you do not pay £5 and join the Exarchate, I will kill you." The reader must decide whether that is liberation or annexation.

"The next appearance of the band was on July 29, 1903. Apostol returned with 120 men, and they carried a flag."

This was the first hint to me on the subject,<sup>1</sup> and it came out quite spontaneously. I asked what kind of flag, and the answer was, "A Bulgarian flag." I bade the witness describe it, and he said the

<sup>1</sup> It was, of course, in consequence of this statement that I asked Mr. Contagouris for one of these flags.

colours were white, green, and red, and it bore the motto—*Liberty or death*.

Those are the Bulgarian national colours. The Greek are white and blue. What evidence of brotherhood, or of respect for the feelings of the Greek population—and they admit the town population is Greek—do the revolutionists show by adopting such a flag as that? The Government of Prince Ferdinand may be thoroughly sincere in their desire to see Macedonia a neutral State, but it is clear that the Comitadjis make no such pretence.

The witness Christos Jannides saw the Bulgarians coming.

"I caught up the little children, and drove off the women to a big village near—Goumenitza."

It is, of course, to protect Christian women and children from the Turkish soldiery that Apostol and his fellow-liberators profess to be in arms.

"The band burned four houses belonging to our family, and *cut down the priest's chestnut-trees*."

To cut down fruit-bearing trees is one of those acts which have always marked the distinction between savage and civilised warfare. The most glorious passage in Greek poetry testifies that even the fierce foemen of Sparta spared the olive-trees of Attica.<sup>1</sup>

And now let us recall, after reading the account of this savage raid—the band marching in with the Bulgarian flag displayed, the women and children flying for their lives, the houses burnt, and the fruit-trees cut down—now let us recall the statement of the Bulgarian Agent in Adrianople:

"In 1903 the bands did not attack a single village,

<sup>1</sup> *Œdipus in Colonus*. I have to quote from my own rendering:

And, wonder unknown on Asian soil,  
Or the Dorian isle of Pelops great,  
Planted, self-sown, without man's toil,  
*From the foeman's steel inviolate,*  
Grows in this land the shining leaf  
Of the child-nourishing olive, chief

but solely the Turkish armed forces. The Greeks took arms to assist the Turks."

The Turks (I am resuming the evidence) close a church or school where the priest or schoolmaster has been killed or expelled. In consequence of the flight of Demetrios the villagers of Griva found themselves without a priest. "Nine men were sent to ask for their priest to come back. Apostol was sent for, and he butchered the nine."

The archpriest stated that, out of the two hundred houses of the village, only three or four were really Bulgarian. All the rest were terrorised by the band, which hovers there. "There is no Greek band to protect them."

I was amused to hear him call the village a Port Arthur. It is situated on a crag. The band makes its headquarters there. They have made underground passages between the house, and they slip from one to another when the place is visited by troops. The witnesses thought it would require a large force to capture them. The Government has sent small detachments from time to time, but the band has had no difficulty in evading them.

They went on to tell me something of the state of the country. "The villages between Griva and Salonika are returning to the Patriarchate wherever the troops protect them." The bands levied a merciless taxation: there was a poll-tax of a halfpenny a week for each man, woman, and child. It did not sound very much—£100 a year for the entire village; but there may have been other burdens: the villagers are probably required to feed the bands as well. The £100 a year may go to Sofia.

The witnesses again complained that there were no Greek bands in the neighbourhood. Then followed a surprising statement.

"The first Bulgarian bands that came against us were armed with Russian rifles. *Russia's defeat has broken the influence of the bands.*" The priest lives as a

refugee in Salonika, and he now ventures into the streets after dark—a thing which he dared not do before the Russo-Japanese war.

Consider this, ye Powers styled Christian! You are labouring, Holy Russia herself is labouring, as your mandatory, to restore peace and order in Rumelia. And a refugee Christian priest, dwelling in a Rumelian town, has been enabled to walk the streets in safety by the victories of the heathen Japanese at the extremity of Asia!

What mockery! What bitter degradation for the shameful thing called the European Concert! Five hundred battleships and fifteen millions of European soldiers have failed to protect the life of a poor priest. And the Mikado of Japan has done it. The anarchists and sweaters of the poor who have braved the fulminations of five Christian empires and a free-thinking republic are cowed by what has been called the Yellow Peril!

The Mikado's protégé is living on an alms of £1 a month allowed him by the Greek kingdom—that generous little kingdom. I inquired how he had lived previously. He had had a wheatfield, a vineyard, chestnut-trees, and cocoons. A large quantity of silk is produced in Macedonia. The villages have mulberry-trees on which the worms are fed, and the cocoons are a valuable source of profit.

I asked about the general condition of the villagers, and learned that most of them were yeomen, owning and tilling their own lands. There were in the village fifty, out of two hundred, poorer houses, whose men hired themselves out as labourers. Their wages were from fivepence to a shilling a day, with food. But even these labourers owned their own houses, and some small portion of land as well.

It would not do for these things to get wind in Ireland. There would be an emigration to Rumelia. There are English rural labourers, men with votes, who own neither cottages nor lands.

Of course all these advantages were outweighed by the curse of Turkish rule. I resolved to learn the worst. I closed the little note-book in which I had been taking down the story, and drew the witnesses' attention to my having done so.

"Now," I said, "speak out fearlessly. I will take down nothing that might get you into trouble. Tell me the truth about the Turks."

Then that Greek priest, sent to me by the Greek Consulate, speaking through a Greek interpreter, the correspondent of an English Liberal newspaper, spoke as follows :

"We were formerly well off under the Turks. Now and then the nizams (regular troops) would come and pass a night in the village. When they went away their officer would offer five or ten shillings in payment for what they had eaten. We refused, saying that we wished to have him for our friend, and we divided the cost among us. Passing Bashî-bazouks (irregulars) sometimes stole a fowl, or a piece of linen from a hedge. We paid tithes to the tax-gatherer. We had no complaints against the Turks."

I can hardly doubt that this evidence will surprise most readers as greatly as it did myself. I have thought it worth while to preserve my note-book, showing the previous answers in pencil, and this astonishing postscript written in ink after the witnesses had left. For a Greek priest to defend the Turks, and even apologise for the trespasses of the Bashî-bazouks, the iron must have entered deeply into his soul indeed. And yet the whole picture is consistent. We see a prosperous peasant village, living rent-free on its own land, cultivating its vines and its chestnuts, and feeding its silkworms on the mulberry-trees, vexed only by occasional visits from passing soldiery whose trifling exactions stand in stead of the grinding taxation and conscription that afflict the peasantry of other lands. They are Greeks and Christians, and, in spite of their prosperity, they repine under the rule of Turks and

Moslems, and cherish the fond belief, natural to the heart of man, that they would be better off under the rule of their own kin. Then this horde of conquering savages invades them, and they learn the difference between an old and accustomed despotism, sinking into decay and checked by European opinion, and this new sanguinary reign of terror which they themselves are blamed by Europe for not accepting with gratitude.

It was the first hint to me—and it did not come from a Turkish source—that the whole long Bulgarian campaign, inspired by ambition, carried on by cannibals, and bolstered up by perjury, might be little better than a most wicked and gigantic hoax.

## CHAPTER VII

### A VLACH TOWN

Verria—The Rumanian propaganda—Its effects—Fairy arithmetic—  
A mysterious plague—Bulgarian witnesses—The Thirty-Nine  
Articles—A Turkish school.

At last I found myself in unknown Macedonia. Unknown in spite of all that has been written about it in recent years ; unknown even to the best-informed onlookers, to the Greek Consuls and foreign officers ; unknown even to the protagonists in the strife ; the whole scene lit up from time to time by the glare of burning villages, by whose red flame the shadows of stalking men take on the fearful likeness of wild beasts.

The railway brought us to the town of Verria, or Karaferia. Many of these places have more than one name, whose spelling is as uncertain as the number of its inhabitants, and their racial affinities. The mist that overhangs the political situation is natural to the country, like the exhalations that rise from its marshes, and only the canals and trenches of science can clear it away. Education is the hope of Rumelia, and in the work of education there is a noble rivalry between all these races and religions, with the Hellenes easily first.

The Turkish police met us at the station, and escorted us to an uncomfortable inn whose charges would have astonished and delighted the manager of a London hotel. Sixpence was the price of an



apple—it was clearly a case of English pashas being scarce, if apples were not, like Charles V. and the chicken.

The innkeeper was my first witness. He was a Koutzo-Vlach; and since this question of the Lame Welsh is taken more seriously in some quarters than it is by me, I gave it my full attention. He was a Vlach by race, but had lived some time in Greece, and become a Greek subject. He said there were five hundred Vlach families in the town—roughly 2,500 persons—and that they had no separate quarter, but lived interspersed amongst the Greeks. That is sufficient evidence, to any one who knows Rumelia, that the two races recognise only one nationality.

I asked about the schools. He stated that there were four hundred children attending the Greek schools. There was a Rumanian school, supported from Bucharest, with twenty pupils and fifteen teachers. There were poor families in the town, drawing money from the same source, and calling themselves Rumanians accordingly.

Unfortunately, that was not all. According to this witness the so-called Rumanians have now begun to imitate the violences of the Bulgarians and Greeks. The Greeks have attacked them, they have naturally joined hands with the Bulgars, and a mixed band of Rumans and Bulgars had recently killed seven Greeks near the neighbouring Greek town of Niausta.

Interpreters sometimes exercise their own discretion as to how much of what they hear is worth repeating, as every judge who has had foreign witnesses before him is aware. And sometimes it is the very details they have scamped which throw the most light on the case. I heard the innkeeper use the name of Hilmi Pasha, but nothing about Hilmi Pasha was translated to me. I asked what had been said, and gleaned an important fact. The widows of the slain Greeks had sent a petition to Hilmi Pasha, and his Excellency had responded by banishing the

leading Ruman-Vlach of Verria from the neighbourhood, on suspicion of being privy to the crime.

Now I had been told in Athens and Constantinople and Salonika that the Turkish Government was favouring the Rumanian propaganda, as it favours the Greeks and the Servians and all the others, according to their rivals—it seems to favour every one except the Turks. Vast sums were named to me as having been bestowed from Bucharest on the corrupt pashas. And here I had heard of the first Rumanian violence, and heard at the same time of its prompt punishment.

As soon as I had finished with the innkeeper, I sent out my dragoman to catch a Rumanising Vlach, that I might hear the other side. The dragoman returned without one, reporting that the man he had been directed to, a tailor, had turned yellow with fright, and refused to come. That seemed substantial evidence that the Rumanian proselytes have been terrorised, whether by the other Vlachs or the Greek bands.

The innkeeper then undertook to fetch the director of the Rumanian school. He came, with another master, and escorted by an armed kavass.

His first statement was that he had 100 pupils in his school, instead of twenty. He had had 200 formerly, before these troubles began. The school, he said, was closed in summer, and the teaching staff followed their pupils to the alps, with the migration of the herds.

The bad feeling between them and the Greeks, he told me, had begun three years ago. Before that there had been no trouble. It started with the action of the Greek bands, who had murdered forty Vlach shepherds. The witness thought the ill feeling would disappear as soon as the bands disappeared.

It is no defence for the Greeks, but it is an aggravation of the guilt of the Bulgarians, that the peace of this town, outside the range of their activity, should

have been broken by the spent waves of the storm they were the first to raise. The inhabitants of Verria knew nothing of Bulgarian ambitions. They had no hatred towards one another. The Rumanian proselytes were despised but tolerated. Now, the Folk War has been proclaimed, and first the Greeks, then the Servians, and last the Ruman-Vlachs have been sucked into the evil vortex.

The school director said that his party had no political ambitions. They were very well under the Turks. He had no experience of the Bulgarians; there were none in the district, and he did not know if they would be better rulers than the Turks.

He told me quite frankly that all the money for his school came from Bucharest, and that tuition and books were free. There remained only the question of numbers. He had told me that the school possessed 100 scholars; the inn-keeper had put it at twenty—which was right?

It was the kind of sum which every one must work out for himself in Fairyland. Concealing my purpose, I asked leave to go to the school there and then. The director consented, and we walked round together. I went into every class-room, and counted the heads. I counted 48 boys and 15 girls; my dragoman made it a little less.

Rumanian estimate	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100
Hellenist estimate	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	20
							2)	120
							Mean	60

It was very good fairy arithmetic.

I subsequently called on the tailor who had turned yellow. He told me that a year before his father had been killed by the Greeks. On the other hand, his brother was a teacher in the Greek school. He put

the number of Vlachs in the town at 4,000. The inn-keeper's figure had been 2,500.

$$\begin{array}{r} 4,000 \\ 2,500 \\ \hline 2) 6,500 \\ \hline 3,250 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

I estimate the number of Vlachs in Verria at 3,250.

Very few Vlachs, the tailor added, had accepted the Rumanian evangel. I asked him his own reason for doing so. He replied that he had been moved by his affection for the Rumanian language and national costume. I pointed out that at the moment he was attired in the garb of "Europe." The tailor smiled.

I think Hellas can afford to smile too.

I passed on to the Greek school, and found it crammed with little Koutzo-Vlachs. But they would not admit that they were Koutzo-Vlachs. The word had gone forth that Hellas was in danger, and they were determined to know no race or language but Greek. I could not get them to speak Vlach to me. I questioned child after child. The teacher would point them out to me: "This one speaks Vlach. Or that one." But the children themselves denied the accusation. I began to doubt whether there were 3,250 Vlachs in Verria. At last I found two girls, who consented to use the unpopular tongue. That is what the Rumanians have achieved in Verria.

The Greek infant class contained more scholars than the whole Rumanian school. The average number of pupils in each class of the Greek school was forty. In the Rumanian school I had gone into class-room upon class-room to find one master instilling the love of the Rumanian language and national costume into exactly two pupils.

There was a reason for this. The Rumanian school-master explained it to me. An unusually large number of his scholars were down with sickness. But for this misfortune the school would have worn a very different appearance.

I found afterwards that this explanation was true, because I received it from quite a number of school-masters in the places I visited. A mysterious disease, with whose exact nature I am unacquainted, desolated the country as I advanced. It would seem to deserve the attention of expert bacteriologists. The microbe responsible appeared to be Slavonic in its origin and affinities. It spared the Greek, Turkish, and Jewish schools, while it ravaged those of the Bulgarians and Servians. I am afraid to say how many innocent children fell victims to it in the course of my short journey. I was led to fear that I personally was the vehicle of infection, like the Wandering Jew of Eugene Sue's fascinating romance. Towards the end I positively dreaded to enter a school, so fatal did my presence seem to be. Healthy, active children, scenting me afar off, took to their beds, and languished till I was safely out of reach. If I should be reproached in the Comitadji Press for not having visited more Bulgarian schools, this must be my excuse. It would have been infanticide.

When I was back in the inn after my visit to the schools, the news was brought to me that two Bulgarian labourers were on the premises, working at some building alterations which were going on at the back. This sounded like an opportunity of hearing the Bulgarian side, and it seemed a favourable one. I sent for the two men, who happened to be from the same village, but I was careful to question them apart. Mr. Kalopathakes took down their answers, as they filtered through the dragoman, and I have only to transcribe his notes. As will be seen, the so-called Bulgarians turned out to be Macedonian peasants of uncertain national affinity.

"Nikola Vanni, illiterate. Born at Frangotchi, a village which speaks Bulgarian, and sings in Bulgarian, but has only Greek schools. His little children go to the Greek school. He prefers to speak Bulgarian, but is Patriarchist in his sympathies. Has no special political leanings as between Greek and Bulgarian. He only wants the Turks to go.

"The Turks have tried to dispossess him and his fellow-villagers of their lands. There are one hundred and seventy Christian families, as against thirty Moslem. They have carried the matter before the Courts, where it is still pending. Eight of these Greco-Bulgarian families have recently gone over to Islam, in order to escape these persecutions; and the Turks have increased their severities in order to induce more conversions. These converts are now allowed to appropriate freely the cattle of the other villagers.

"This tyranny of the Turks dates back two years. The witness would be glad to have a band in his village, he does not care whether a Bulgarian or Greek one."

It was a remarkable story. It bore out a good deal that has been said in the Comitadji Press on the subject of Turkish oppression. But the remarkable thing about it was that the oppression had begun after the work of liberation. The general statement made to me everywhere else had been—"The Turk is on his good behaviour." And this desirable result had been attributed to the Bulgarian atrocities. In the village of Frangotchi the case seemed to be the reverse. As in the town of Verria itself, neighbours hitherto at peace had been stirred up to the work of proselytism and persecution. The Christians had resorted to murder. The Moslems had not yet gone beyond vexatious litigation and robbery.

The second witness was called in. He appeared to be little more than half-witted, and gave his answers with an idiotic chuckle.

"Antoni Stancoff, of Frangotchi. Speaks no Greek. Is a Patriarchist. Does not know the difference

between Patriarchist and Exarchist. Suffers from the exactions of the Turks. Does not want any band in his village. Has no preference between Greek and Bulgarian, so long as the Turk goes. Would prefer even Austrian rule to Turkish."

It will be seen that the two men differed in their views about the bands, though they agreed in everything else. Both spoke without experience, and neither of them distinguished between the two classes of bands. The Greek bands were called into existence to protect the villages from the Bulgarians, but one of these men evidently considered that a Greek band would protect him from the Turks.

The fact that stands out most forcibly is that the population they represented has no national sentiment whatever. Neither Sofia nor Athens has any attraction for them. The Exarch and the Patriarch are names. They cling to what they believe is Christianity, though it appears that some of them do not cling fanatically to that. They are called Bulgars at one moment, in right of their dialect, and Greeks the next, in right of their Church.

These witnesses are thoroughly representative of that Christian rural population for whose allegiance Athens and Sofia are contending. Athens waged the fight by means of her schools, and she was victorious all along the line. Sofia replied by organising her armed bands, and the scale turned in her favour. Now Athens has taken up the same weapons, and, as of old, Pallas has proved mightier even in the field than Mars.

Where the witnesses are united and emphatic is in their protest against the Turks. It is true that the particular wrongs they complain of are recent, but the very fact that thirty families are able to oppress one hundred and seventy sufficiently shows that the Moslems are a privileged class, the most important of their privileges probably being that of carrying arms. It is clear that it must require very great

vigilance on the part of the Government, or very great good nature on that of the privileged population, to prevent such an ascendancy degenerating into tyranny.

While I was in this country a person who desired to influence me against the Sultan said to me, "The Moslems are very peaceful now, but if the Sultan were to give them the word to-morrow, they would rise and massacre the Christians."

If that were so, I should have thought it a point in favour of the Sultan that he would not give the word. On the contrary, I was informed from a Christian source that a short time before messengers from Constantinople had been sent through the country, going into every mosque, to enjoin the Moslems not to touch one hair of a Christian head, and warning them that if there were the smallest outrage by a Moslem on a Christian they would lose the country for ever.

Such, I cannot doubt, is the true attitude of the Turkish sovereign, who sees more clearly than any of his subjects, Moslem or Christian, the shadow of Austria thrown across the frontier of Macedonia, and hears the subdued tramp of her armies from afar.

I called on the Archbishop of Verria. He is a learned theologian, one of several to whom the Patriarch has committed the task of examining the question of a union between the Greek and Anglican Churches. He explained to me that the difficulty lay in the Thirty-nine Articles. That was Newman's difficulty. Everything depended on the interpretation put upon certain Articles. Newman, at one time, proposed a non-natural interpretation. It was interesting to find the problems which disturbed Oxford seventy years ago being pondered by this foreign prelate in an obscure Rumelian town amid the turmoil of a revolution.



The Archbishop's studious leisure was in some degree enforced upon him. He was confined to the town by order of the Turkish Government. The same regulation has been applied to a number of other Metropolitans, who have fallen under suspicion of fanning the flames of the Folk War.

The Archbishop told me that the local authorities had taken from him one out of the numerous churches in the town, and given it to the Rumanians, who conduct their services in that language. A guard of ten soldiers had to be stationed at the doors on account of the hostility of the Greeks in the neighbourhood.

The Turkish Chief of Police, however, assured me that the Greeks of the town did no harm to the Rumanians, and his testimony was another instance of that fairness and indifference which I found generally marking the attitude of the Turks towards these Christian quarrels.

The Chief of Police called at the inn no less than three times during the day to offer his services—from the worst motives, according to my dragoman. The next morning I received a visit from the *kaimakam* of Verria, *Leny Bey*. The governor told me he had come from Beyrout, and his manners had a touch of Syrian or Arabian grace which made him seem as much out of place on the slopes of the Pindus as Ovid on the shores of the Euxine. With what feelings can such a man regard the Folk War? With much the same feelings, doubtless, as those with which an English governor would regard the savageries perpetrated on each other by two negro tribes in his province.

I proposed a visit to the Turkish school, and we walked there together, through the narrow streets, paved with the fearful Macedonian cobblestone; streets in which the shops are like open sheds, where you may see the shoemaker stitching, and the coppersmith hammering his metal as you go by; streets wherein

you may have to save yourself from being squeezed by the faggots borne past you on the backs of some train of donkeys descending from the highlands; streets variegated by stealthy latticed windows—the defence of Moslem privacy—and broken up here and there by a market-place, or an unexpected well beneath the shadow of an oak like that of Mamre.

A Turkish town in Europe is a Byzantine town; that it is to say, it is a scene from the Middle Ages magically preserved to our own day. We are in Fairyland, we are in *The Arabian Nights*, and the wicked djinn has cast a spell upon the land. Let us walk on tiptoe, lest we disturb the enchanted slumber of the Sleeping Beauty of the Wood.

As we crossed the threshold of the Turkish school—a much more modest one than that of Kirk-Kilissi—I saw a sight that I had been too dull to anticipate, that no book had brought before me. There, where an English school would have shown rows of pegs hung with the caps of the scholars, stood a row of shelves on which were ranged in order perhaps a hundred pairs of little shoes. I cannot say why that sight touched me as it did. Perhaps my mind unconsciously recalled the language of the fanatical Western Press, and I pictured the little feet trudging dolefully along all the roads of Rumelia, towards the Bosphorus, in obedience to that righteous sentence: "The Turk must go!"

In the school itself the kaimakam pointed out to me some boys in village dress—and every village has its own dress in this part of the world. They were the children of the woodcutters from the mountains, who placed them in the school to keep them out of the streets during the few days that the caravan remained in the town. The woodcutters were Albanians, from the land of vendettas, where every man carries his life in his hand. And they would not expose their children to the perils of the streets of a Christian town.

After we had visited the school the kaimakam himself proposed to show me the mosque, an ancient building, with an inscription in gold letters over the door in praise of Allah and of the pious builder. We crossed the threshold without a suggestion that I should remove my boots. In visiting the great mosque of Adrianople I had merely been asked to put on slippers over them. The custom seems due to love of cleanliness, and not to superstition, as far as the Turks are concerned. Islam here is not the religion that we find in Tangier. There is little hatred of the Christian, as such. He is hated as a traitor and an enemy of Islam, when he is hated at all.

In the cemetery of the mosque the Syrian governor pointed out to me the tomb of his wife. She had died six months before, leaving him with one young child. He, some day, will go back to Syria, or perhaps to far-off Mesopotamia, but she will remain there. The price of empire must be paid.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GREEK TOWNS

**N** austa—Bulgarian statistics—Signs of progress—Bulgarian boycott—Greek aspirations—Vodena—Russian gendarmery officers—Philip of Macedon—An exemplary sentence—The wizard—A glimpse of the Middle Ages—Three schools—Archiepiscopal friendliness.

THERE is a town perched on a small plateau at the mouth of a mountain pass, and overlooking the great Macedonian plain. It is a strategical position which could not have been overlooked by Roman eyes, and the town may be Roman in its origin. Its official name is Augusta ; its inhabitants call it Niausta.

Niausta is famous in the history of the War of Greek Independence. Six thousand beings are said to have been slaughtered on its reduction by the Turkish forces. The shadow of the tragedy still hangs over Niausta. I found a touch of sadness in the air which I found nowhere else, and a more obstinate repining under Turkish rule.

“Niausta is a Bulgarian town of 1,500 inhabitants.” Such is the statement contained in a book which I have found quoted by British Consuls as if it were a serious work of reference. Its author is supposed to be a Mr. Brancoff, whether a man or a mythical being there seems to be some doubt. The Bulgarian Foreign Office is a better judge of human nature in the twentieth century than I am. Instead of putting forth its extravagant pretensions in the form of a

controversial work, it embodies them in what might be a companion volume to *Kelly's Directory*. Brancoff gives the tranquil assurance of an almanac. You know there must be thirty-one days in January, and 1,500 Bulgarians in Niausta.

But the Bulgarians of Niausta are a shy and retiring race. On my arrival I found they had silently withdrawn into some secret lurking-place inaccessible to human curiosity, and their place had been taken by a population of 9,000 Greeks and 1,000 Turks.

We drove over from Verria in a carriage, the journey taking about five hours. We were escorted by four bright-blue gendarmes, under a Christian corporal, and we stopped half-way to take lunch in the open air. The leading Greek inhabitants had been warned of our coming, and we were hospitably received and lodged in a very comfortable private house.

In the afternoon we were taken to see a cotton-mill as an evidence of Greek enterprise and industry. The factory was situated below the town, and worked by water-power. The stream which watered the valley was caught as it came tumbling over the edge of the plateau, and imprisoned in a long iron tube, leaning almost perpendicularly against the cliff. The water rushed out at the bottom with tremendous force and drove the great turbine which governed the machinery of the mill.

We saw the whole process of manufacture, beginning with the snowy bales of cotton brought up from the railway, and ending with the finished thread. From the factory the thread is distributed to the country villages, where the women weave it into cloth on the handlooms of a bygone age.

Three hundred women and girls, from the age of ten upwards, are employed in the Niausta mill, and the working-day lasts from sunrise to sunset, or on an average twelve hours. It is progress, it is civilisation, but even when the Turk has gone there will still be something left for the Labour Party to do in Niausta.

But the most surprising thing that met me in this small Greek town away in the Macedonian highlands was an English football. The game came out there fifteen years ago; perhaps it came with the cotton mill. The townspeople showed us, with pride, the goal-posts and the ground on which the game was played. I may say here, perhaps, that the game is not less popular, although of more recent importation, in Athens. I witnessed a well-played match between the clubs of Athens and Piræus; and it was amusing to hear the descendants of Olympic athletes shouting out the English cries of "Foul!" and "Off-side!"

In the evening we talked politics, some of our hosts speaking English. There was a Greek band in Niausta, but it was away on business. Since its first coming the villages in the neighbourhood had been ordered to boycott the town. The Internal Organisation evidently places less faith in Brancoff than do the Consuls. It does not know that Niausta is a centre of Bulgarianism.

In consequence of this decree the tradesmen of the town have to go out to the villages with their wares. The villagers complain to them of the order, but are afraid to disobey it. The older people—and I heard this in other places—take the Patriarch's excommunication to heart, and consider it a sin to accept the Exarchate.

The progress of the Bulgarian movement was described to me. When the Comitadjis first came into the neighbourhood they said nothing about the people being Macedonians, nor about a neutral State. They invited the peasants to point out any landlord who was oppressing them, and offered to murder him. By acts like these they won the allegiance of the people, and they openly claimed it for Bulgaria.

I endeavoured to ascertain what hopes and wishes were cherished by the Greeks. They were unanimous in preferring Turkish to Bulgarian domination. They had ceased to reckon on the Greek kingdom being

able to annex the country by its own strength. Some of them said they wished England would take it.

"But the Greeks of Cyprus are not contented under English rule," I reminded them. "They have just been asking to be annexed to Greece."

"They ought to have held their tongues," was the response. "It was the wrong time to make such a request."

And so it was pretty evident what they really wished England to do for them.

They were watching the progress of the Powers in reforming Macedonia with more uneasiness than hope. An international control, with Russian and Austrian and Italian officials, was evidently not regarded as promising much for the Hellenist cause.

I said that if the present anarchy continued to rage it might end in a mandate to Austria to march in and occupy the country.

Then it was that one of them said, with sadness, "I should be glad of an Austrian occupation, because she rules Bosnia well. If Austria were to come we should be Europeans."

And that was the only expression favourable to Austria which I elicited in the whole of my inquiry. The speaker has since died. He was an old man, a doctor, and he had lived in England. He left on me the impression that there is something difficult to indicate in words which yet renders the lot of an educated man an unhappy one under the Turkish administration. There was something inexpressibly pathetic in that remark, "We should be Europeans."

From Niausta we went on to Vodena, the ancient Edessa. For those who attach weight to archaeological arguments, Vodena presents a strong case. While there I was given an ancient coin on which the name of Edessa was clearly legible in Greek letters. Alexander the Great seems to have been much less prejudiced against the Hellenic culture than his successors, Messrs. Tchakalaroff and Apostol and



FLAG OF ANCHIALOS, AT NEW ANCHIALOS.

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Sarafoff. Edessa was the burying-place of the "Bulgarian" kings (known to Europe as Macedonian) and some ruins are believed to mark the spot of their interment.

We were met at the railway station and conducted to a private house engaged for us by the hospitable Metropolitan, a man of very superior character and ability. Although warmly Hellenist, he has conducted himself with so much discretion in his difficult position that the Turkish authorities had not imposed in his case the restriction under which I found so many of his colleagues suffering. This is the more remarkable since he is a young man to have risen so high; I believe he is still under forty.

He called on me as soon as we were settled in our quarters, and we saw a good deal of each other during the two days I remained.

It was here that I came first into active contact with the Bulgars. There is a Bulgarian quarter in the town, and a Russian gendarmery officer is stationed there. This officer, by name Bairaktaroff,<sup>1</sup> I was told, attended the Bulgarian Church. The Russian Church is in communion with the Patriarch, and therefore, from an ecclesiastical point of view, his rightful place should have been among the flock of the Greek Archbishop. But, for whatever reason, perhaps his attachment to the Bulgarian language, the Russian officer preferred to incur the guilt of schism by worshipping with the Exarchists.

His choice of a residence was also commented on. A Bulgarian schoolmaster of the town had turned Comitadji and was now away in Sofia, and the Russian officer had unfortunately taken up his quarters in the Comitadji's house. This may have been an act of confiscation, but it was not so regarded by the Greeks.

Yet this gentleman was considered an improvement

<sup>1</sup> I must apologise to a Board School generation if any names or words are incorrectly spelt.

on his predecessor, who had omitted to return the visit of the Greek Archbishop, refused to receive the Greek schoolmasters, and declined to inquire into murders committed upon Greeks. He had been the subject of an official complaint on the part of the Patriarch for openly trying to proselytise the villagers on behalf of the Comitadjis whom he was supposed to be sent to put down.

As this last charge has been denied, I desired to have first-hand evidence on the subject. A bright, sturdy-looking lad was sent for, a native of a Bulgarian-speaking village, but now employed in the town of Vodena. He told his story in a straightforward fashion, without any prompting, and it certainly impressed me as being perfectly true.

"My name is Christos Janno. I am a miller from Messemari. I am fifteen years old.

"Four years ago I remember a Russian officer speaking to me in my village. There were six Russian officers, including their head, Colonel Schostak. I was coming from my farm. They stopped me and asked what I was doing. They spoke in Bulgarian—not in the local Bulgarian, but in the real Bulgarian. I understood it pretty well.

"I said, 'I have been picking cherries, and am going home.'

"The officer said, 'What are you?'

"I said, 'I am a Greek.' (The boy's own word to me was *Gerko*.)

"He said, 'What are the rest of you in your village—Greeks or Bulgarians?'

"I said, 'Most are Greeks; there are some Bulgarians.'

"He said, 'You all speak Bulgarian; how do you know?'

"*We discussed Philip.*

"He said, 'My boy, those school-teachers are only fooling you. You are Bulgarians, not Greeks. Good-bye.'

"This officer remained behind the others to talk like that."

The scene is not without its amusing side. The representative of the Russian Army conducting a solemn argument with a village boy of eleven over the nationality of Philip of Macedon, and getting rather the worst of the argument—if I have correctly estimated the character of Master Christos Janno—would make an admirable episode in a farce. None the less, it throws an instructive sidelight on what has been going on in Macedonia, and it might do no harm if the Mikado's influence were to penetrate to Messemari.

The boy's account of this conversation reached the ears of the Archbishop of Vodena, and the Patriarch laid a formal complaint before the Turkish authorities, with the result that the Russian Government undertook to rebuke its agent.

Unless this story is a pure fabrication, in what position does it leave the other Powers associated with Russia in repressing the Bulgarian bands? How is it possible for the Greeks, or the Comitadjis, to believe that the foreign gendarmery is impartial? How is it possible for the Turks to look upon such officers in any other light than that of hostile agents, introduced into their dominions under false pretences, to assist and comfort the very enemy the Turks are being hypocritically urged to crush?

Christos Janno had more to tell me. The Bulgarians had killed the priest of his village, and twenty-five men out of a population of a thousand since the Folk War broke out. The priest and six others were killed about two years ago. Some gendarmes came to see what had happened. They marched up and marched down again without doing anything. No Russians came on that occasion, but when the Bulgarians were killed by Greeks the Russians came.

The boy stated, what I believe is not in dispute, that the Bulgarian bands live on the country, and levy taxes even on their own friends, while the Greek

bands pay their way. Indeed, the Comitadjis claim this as a proof that the country is with them.

Another glimpse of the liberators at their work was afforded by the director of a cotton-mill at Vodena—Mr. Gregori Tsitses. The Bulgarians sent to demand the sum of £100 from him. He refused, and succeeded in having one of the blackmailers tried and convicted. The man received the exemplary sentence of 101 years' imprisonment. Unfortunately, more merciful counsels afterwards prevailed—at the suggestion of what foreign advisers it were well not to ask—and the prisoner was discharged before the expiration of the sentence. He took advantage of this leniency to commit a murder, and then fled to the United States of America. He should be warmly welcomed by the friends of Bulgaria in that country.

Another gentleman whom I met in Vodena, Mr. Kotchapanyotti, mentioned, in the course of conversation, that he had been twice shot at because he was in the habit of speaking on behalf of the Greeks.

The kaimakam of Vodena, one of the most mild and unassuming men it is possible to imagine, also came to see me. He assured me he could put a stop to the bands in his *caza* if he were allowed to arrest the few villagers here and there who protect them. He is prevented from doing so by "strangers." I thought I could guess the identity of the strangers, whom the kaimakam was too prudent to indicate more distinctly.

I referred to the similar course adopted by Mr. Forster in Ireland, though without much success. The Turkish governor replied that the peasants here were better off than those of Ireland.

"Most of them are landed proprietors. More of them might become so. The land is for sale, but the propagandists prevent the peasants from buying it. They prefer to keep them serfs, so that they may support the agitation."

He further stated that there were brigands who

tried to prevent the people of the villages from coming into the town to market, but troops were sent out to patrol the roads and protect the peasants. These brigands, he thought, were not inspired by political motives, but they were Bulgars.

Murder, mutilation, arson, blackmail, forgery, perjury, and highway robbery—all these do not exhaust the weapons in the armoury of freedom. One yet more potent has been devised by the liberators of Macedonia, more potent in its effects on the peasant mind. Sorcery has been employed: a Bulgarian wizard has made his appearance in Vodena, in the course of an extended tour. But he reckoned without the Greeks; he had relied on Brancoff, doubtless, and his familiar spirit failed to warn him that there were Greeks in the town. They denounced him to the authorities, and he is now incarcerated in a Turkish gaol at Salonika, where he weaves his spells in vain.

It is another case of Turkish tyranny. In the enlightened West the laws against witchcraft have long been abolished. The sorcerer should have come to London, and been the lion of the season. It was a mistake to ply his craft in Fairyland.

Above all, the spirit of the Middle Ages breathed on Vodena by night. We walked to the Archbishop's palace, through the narrow, tortuous lanes that might have been trodden by Godfrey of Bouillon and the Crusaders, our feet guided by a swinging lantern. In one place a stream flowed silently beside us, and the shape of a great wooden water-wheel turned slowly in the darkness; and behind the over-hanging walls on either side we knew there lurked armed bands as fierce as any that ever reddened Florentine streets with blood, whose war was as inhuman as the jacqueries that ever and anon swept over feudal France.

We reached the palace and found it to be a veritable fortress. A small wicket was opened in the

great iron gate, and then we were admitted through a species of gate tower, and conducted across a spacious courtyard to the Archbishop's residence.

There we sat late into the night with the Archbishop and some other leaders of the Greek party in the town. Again we thrashed out the situation, and again the verdict was the same. "If we cannot belong to the Greek kingdom, leave us as we are. The Turk is better than the Bulgarian. Under his rule we still have hope. Under a European Power we should lose that."

On the last morning before leaving Vodena I visited three schools—Servian, Bulgarian, and Greek.

This was the first hint of Servia, a country which has been stirred up to defend its fellow-nationalists from the devouring ambition of the Principality. And Servia is following the example of Bucharest as well as of Sofia. She has her bands in the north, where Servians are to be found, and her missions in the south, where they are not.

The Servian school of Vodena is a charitable institution, and that is the best that can be said of it. It educates about fifty children, boys and girls, and I think feeds and clothes some or all of them. When I arrived they were all in the playground, and I asked to see their games. The superintendent set them going on one which resembled the old English game now known as "Oranges and Lemons." The children danced round in a ring, and then the two leaders formed an arch with their hands, through which the others passed.

They were singing as they danced, of course in Servian, and I asked for a translation of the words. They were about some famous Servian hero of the past, and the refrain was like this :

"Who are you ?"

"A follower of——" (the hero).

"Where are you bound for ?"

*"For Belgrade."*

"Then pass through."

And so there are now fifty little Servians in Vodena.

The Bulgarians are rather more numerous, and a good deal more bona fide. My estimate of the numbers in the Bulgarian boys' school was a hundred. I have not preserved the figures offered me by the schoolmaster, nor his rather partial statistics of the Bulgarian population. When I asked him the number of Greeks in the town he replied, with the utmost sang-froid :

"There are no Greeks in Vodena."

Perhaps it was from him that "Brancoff" obtained its information.

In the absence of a definite note, I am unable to feel certain whether it was here or at Florina that I found the boys of the Bulgarian school in the playground, engaged in the classic game of marbles. They seemed to toss the marble rather than shoot it in the English fashion. I invited one urchin to lend me his marble, but he was too distrustful. Another was more confiding, and I gave an illustration of the English art. Instantly there was a cry of joy and admiration. All the little Bulgarians crowded round me, and I had much ado to make my way through them to the school-house door. They followed me upstairs to the threshold of the master's room.

It was just what the boys of an English village school would have done. And the faces of the boys were the most English I had yet come across. I was confirmed in an old suspicion that there must be a good deal of Slave blood in our own peasantry. The Angles and Saxons, when they came over, did not come alone. They brought their thralls with them, and they came from a part of Germany where the Slaves have left their signature in a series of place-names. There is, I think, a touch of kinship in that sympathy with the Slave, whether Russian or Bul-



garian, which is so strong especially among the English Nonconformists. Indeed, there may have been a Slave immigration long before Hengist and Horsa.

I went on from the Bulgarian schoolmaster, in some uncertainty, to my friend the Patriarchist Archbishop. I must not call him Greek, because that would be to contradict the schoolmaster, but I feel sure he was not a Bulgar, and he did not seem to be a Turk.

The Archbishop showed me over an ancient church situated within the precincts of his fortress. One carved pillar he pointed out to me as dating from a forgotten antiquity, perhaps from the days of Saul of Tarsus. The apostle paid a visit to Macedonia, but, for whatever reason, he ignores the Bulgarian character of its population in his references to the country. The Exarchate will have to prepare a fresh version of his epistles, if not of the whole New Testament. If Aristotle has been converted into a Bulgarian, why not Saint Luke?

Was the Archbishop's motive in showing me over his church a purely antiquarian one, or was it a piece of fairy strategy? I like to think the best, but when I at last prevailed on him to take me in to the school I suspected that the delay was not quite accidental. I heard a tramp of hurrying feet, a door was thrown open, and I found myself in front of a dense mass of youngsters, drawn up in serried lines, across the floor of a room cleared of desks and benches. I counted more than two hundred boys, and these were only part; I had not given the prelate time to complete his preparations, and I found other boys at work elsewhere.

This was only one of the Greek schools in the town. Would an Archbishop have caused contingents to be summoned from other schools for the purpose of making an exaggerated impression on an unsuspecting stranger?—impossible!

The boys sang, but they did not sing "The Song of the Flag." They sang hymns—clearly a more decorous proceeding in the presence of an Archbishop. The Turkish governor, who had also dropped in, listened with the greatest amiability to these Christian exercises.

We were seen off at the railway station by the Archbishop, the governor, and the military commandant, on whom I had called to thank him for furnishing me with an escort the day before. This officer impressed me very favourably. He described to me the measures he was taking to deal with the bands, and he was evidently to the full as keen and capable as any foreign officer of gendarmery.

We sat waiting for the train, and drinking coffee, at a little open-air refreshment-room, Greek Bishop and Turkish kaimakam, Greek Protestant professor and Turkish commandant, and your unofficial envoy; and it was as well, perhaps, that no prowling photographer in the pay of the Comitadjis was there to snapshot the picture, and doom us all to the same infamy as his Eminence of Castoria.

And even that was not my last glimpse of Vodena. On leaving Monastir, some time afterwards, to return to Salonika my dragoman told me he had had instructions to wire the Archbishop of Vodena when I was coming through. And when the train stopped at the station I found this hospitable prelate there to meet me, with coffee and other refreshments ready, and he got into the carriage and chatted till the train was moving on.

Such charming acts of friendship—and I have not mentioned one half that I received—ought to be set off against the rough roads, the bad inns, and the other hardships of travel in Rumelia. For the stranger all these people have nothing but kindness in their hearts. Would that he could repay them by persuading them to feel more kindness for one another!

## CHAPTER IX

### MACEDONIAN VILLAGES

Rural jealousy—The language test—Under escort—Vladovo—  
"Makedonski"—An exarchist—Victims of the Folk War—  
Russian sympathy—A dramatic incident—A public reception—  
How Nisia was liberated—A wedding party—A Turkish officer

IN Rumelia, as in most other countries, the villages are more numerous than the towns, and there is apt to be a certain jealousy between them. What candidate for an English parliamentary division has not been told by his agent, "The villages are jealous of the town. You must be careful not to give more attention to the town than to the villages"?

This jealousy will always exist, under whatever form of government, because the conditions will always exist. The townsman is always richer in money than the villager; his life has more distractions, his manners tend to be more polished. The villagers believe that the town is draining them of their wealth. They grudge the corn and hay and meat and vegetables with which they supply the town, and are ungrateful for the clothes and tools, the ploughs and harness, the books and medicines, with which the town supplies them in return. Thus the French departments are jealous of Paris; and rural Bulgaria, I make no doubt, is jealous of Sofia.

This is an eternal jealousy; it is, in a deep sense, the jealousy of the Folk and Hellas.

In Rumelia such a jealousy may easily be treated

as a racial one, and hence no string has been more artfully and persistently harped on by the Comitadjis, whether in Macedonia or outside. The Greek-speaking townsman is represented as an enemy little less obnoxious than the Moslem villager. The inhabitants of Vodena and Niausta are described as "an ignoble aristocracy of talent, half clerical, half commercial, which exploits an alien peasantry that it despises."<sup>1</sup> Language, or rather dialect, is treated as the exclusive test of nationality, and if a Slave-speaking villager dares to call himself a "Gerko" we are told that he is terrorised by Greek bands, or fooled by Greek school-teachers, or hypnotised by Greek priests, and if he is not secretly longing to be taxed from Sofia then he is a soulless brute who would call himself a Hottentot for a consideration.

Let me dispose of this language question once for all.

In Asia Minor there is a large Greek population which speaks nothing but Turkish. Their Bishops preach to them in Turkish,<sup>2</sup> which is, as a Turk once politely reminded me, the language of the country. Yet no one has ever suggested that they are Turks, and no one would be more surprised by such a suggestion than the Turks themselves.

In Ireland there is a large Irish population which speaks nothing but English. Their Bishops preach to them in English, and their political leaders harangue them in English against the evils of English rule. Their blood is known not to be free from English admixture. Yet no one has ever questioned that they are Irish, and they are far more anti-English in their national sentiment than the Welsh-speaking Welsh.

Celtic anthropologists now tell us that the whole group of Celtic dialects, including Welsh, has been

<sup>1</sup> *Macedonia*, by H. N. Brailsford, p. 218. That an aristocracy of talent should be more ignoble than one of birth or conquest is a "New Liberalism" indeed.

<sup>2</sup> A charge brought against the Archbishop of Florina, in Macedonia.

imported into the British Islands almost within historic times, and that the so-called Celtic peoples are largely, if not mainly, Pictish ; that is to say, they are descended from an older population among which the Celts came as conquerors. And that is exactly the case of Macedonia.

The peasantry which the Government of Sofia desires to govern is older than Sofia, and older than the Bulgarian invasion. Its original speech has been lost, and it is as likely as not to be represented by Albanian. Under the Macedonian kings it became Greek. Under the Romans it may have taken a Roman tinge, with the result preserved in the Vlach dialect. Under the successive invasions of Serbs and Bulgars it became a Slave dialect resembling Bulgar rather than Serb. Under the Turks whole villages embraced the language of the new conquerors with their religion. To-day this peasantry is returning to Greek, under the influence of the schools, and claiming a Hellenic nationality. The efforts of the Rumanian propaganda have only resulted in causing the Vlach dialect to be discarded as an anti-national badge. And the efforts of the Comitadjis are now causing the Slave dialect to be discarded from the same motive, as we shall see.

On the second day of my stay in Vodena I made an excursion with Mr. Kalopathakes to two villages claimed as Bulgarian by their enemies, but claimed by themselves to be Greek.

The surrounding country being harried by bands, we were given a strong escort, consisting of twenty soldiers, five of them mounted, under the command of a captain who spoke French. I am not sure that he was wholly innocent of English, and at one moment I communicated my suspicion to Mr. Kalopathakes in Latin. The captain almost immediately put a question in French, which had rather the air of being intended to convince us that he had not understood our previous remarks in English.

If it was a case of "espionage" it was a very natural and a very harmless one. I, at all events, had nothing to conceal from the Turkish authorities, nor from anybody else. I should have been quite content to have been accompanied throughout my journey by a cloud of witnesses—Turkish, Bulgarian, and Rumanian—and to have had my every word taken down by a sworn stenographer. But my companion's name was against him, and, when one comes to think of it, it was an extraordinary exercise of good nature on the part of the Turkish authorities that they should have received him everywhere on practically the same footing as myself. Provided you are not actually firing at him, the Oriental despot seems to let you do anything you like; and the English Comitadji writer who succeeded in getting himself arrested by Turkish gendarmes has some reason to boast of his unique exploit.

We rode along a rough mountain road overlooking a cultivated valley. The Turkish officer pointed out to me, with pardonable satisfaction, that the peasants were out working in their fields as usual, in spite of the disturbed state of the country. A force of chasseurs, he told me, was that very day scouring the hills on our left hand in search of the enemy. Our escort was partly composed of these scouts, their brown, serviceable uniforms being in marked contrast to the cerulean clothes adopted for the gendarmery by its Italian organiser.

I began to understand why it is that the Italians have not yet succeeded in putting down brigandage in their own country, and to respect the honourable motives which have caused them to withdraw officers so much needed at home in order to place them at the service of a friendly foreign Government.

Vladova, the first village, was reached after a two-hours' ride. It stands at the head of the pass, where the hills open out to embrace a wide flat basin, watered by a river, a landscape that called up the

Happy Valley of *Rasselas*, and of many an Eastern tale.

Here we dismounted, and partook of coffee in the little guard-house which the Turks had set up in the village, for the protection of the inhabitants. I sent out for a man who seemed to be a leading spirit in the place, and he came into the guard-house, and answered my questions freely in the presence of the Turkish captain.

He stated that there were from 120 to 140 houses in the village (600 or 700 persons), the majority Patriarchist. I asked what language they spoke, and my Greek interpreter carelessly rendered the answer *Bulgare*. The man himself had said *Makedonski*!

I drew attention to this word,<sup>1</sup> and the witness explained that he did not consider the rural dialect used in Macedonia the same as Bulgarian, and refused to call it by that name. It was Macedonian, a word to which he gave the Slave form of *Makedonski*, but which I was to hear farther north in the Greek form of *Makedonike*.

And so the "Bulgarophone" villagers are no longer willing to admit that they speak Bulgarian. They have coined a new term of their own accord, and henceforth their dialect, until they have got rid of it, is to be known as "Macedonian." My Athenian friends were delighted when I told them of this on my return. It should give even greater pleasure to those Bulgarian Agents who are so anxious to see the Macedonians taught that they are Macedonians.

The witness was careful to add that the children of the village were learning Greek.

He said that the Bulgarian bands had killed many of the Macedonians, and that there were Comitadjis

<sup>1</sup> I hope I need not explain that my object here is to make it manifest that all this was no prepared scene, and that if there be anything inaccurate in this report it is not for lack of reasonable vigilance.

hiding in the village at that moment. The Turkish officer naturally asked him to point out their lurking-place, but this he was unable or unwilling to do.

I dismissed him, and sent for a representative of the Exarchist faction. His manner was much less confident than his predecessor's, and he would not look me in the eye. But he seemed more ashamed than afraid, and he maintained his ground well in an argument with the Turkish captain about the language.

The Exarchist had described the language of the village as Bulgarian, and the captain promptly took him up, pointing out a string of words which were different in the two dialects. The Exarchist answered:

"I can understand those *who come from Bulgaria*."

No one took any notice of the admission, but it was the best, because the most spontaneous, evidence that I had yet obtained as to the part played by Sofia in the liberation of Macedonia. The Patriarchist witness had described the Comitadjis as wearing Bulgarian uniforms and bearing Bulgarian colours. According to the Exarchist they also used the Bulgarian speech. And this admission, which knocks the bottom out of the pretence that the Macedonian revolution is an internal and spontaneous one of the Macedonians themselves, was made by a Bulgarian partisan in argument with a Turkish officer, who took no notice of it.

The fact is, I suppose, that no one on the spot has ever heard of the theory that this sanguinary business is the work of the people themselves. It is a theory originating where the movement itself originated, in Sofia. But it is good enough for consumption in the meridian of Fleet Street.

The Exarchist claimed that his party had sixty or seventy houses in the village; the Patriarchist had awarded them fifteen or twenty. I will not work out another fairy sum; I think it likely that there



may have been twenty houses of convinced Bulgarians, and another thirty or forty influenced by fear of the liberating bands.

The Exarchist admitted that the Bulgarian bands arrived on the scene before the Greeks ; but, of course, that has never been denied, although it seems to be habitually forgotten.

We made but a short halt at Vladova, as the other village, Nisia, was two hours further on. As we were riding out of the village we were met by a group of half a dozen women, who had heard of my coming and wished me to know of their troubles. All were Macedonians, and all were widows, rendered such by the Bulgarian invaders of their country.

I expressed my sympathy with them, and was about to ride on, when one woman suddenly thrust herself forward from the others and made the following statement :

"The Russian officers came here after the death of my husband and son, and said, before the priest and other people, 'You had better call yourselves Bulgarians or you will all be killed.'"

It was an unsolicited statement, and, so far as I was concerned, an unexpected one. The woman seemed to make it under a strong feeling of resentment. I imagine that the incident had made a deep impression in the village, and that the woman, either of her own accord or prompted by her friends, seized the opportunity of complaining to some one who might be expected not to let the matter drop. In short, I took it as an appeal on the part of the persecuted population of Macedonia against the foreign gendarmery officers for whose proceedings we have a joint responsibility.

The words attributed to the Russian officers were true. These people were being slaughtered because they would not call themselves Bulgarians. Personally, I do not doubt that the words were used. I am

sure that every Russian, in his heart, must think it would be much better for these villagers to call themselves Bulgarians. It would be still better for them to call themselves Turks; but what would be thought or said if Turkish officers were to tell them so over the corpses of their dead, who had been foully slain by Turkish bandits?

The Powers have taken needless trouble to bring officers all the way from Sevastopol to guard these poor creatures from the Bulgarian bands. It would have been simpler to invite Bulgaria to supply the police as well as the criminals. Sarafoff would have made a first-rate gendarmery officer. We should set a thief to catch a thief.

From Vladova to Nisia the way wound round the base of a precipitous hill, skirting the Happy Valley. At one spot, where the rocks that overhung the path were more than ever threatening, there was the sound of a sharp crack overhead. The Turkish officer hastily put up his field-glass, and scrutinised the spot from whence the sound had come.

"They are cutting wood," he remarked as he lowered his glass.

The officer was mistaken, as it happened. On our return to Vodena I learned that I had been honoured with another escort, in addition to that provided by the Government. A Greek band had followed us all the way, keeping along the brow of the hill, and it was an unfortunate movement of one of their men which attracted the officer's attention.

We had reason to be thankful that the band was Greek. At that particular spot a party on the top of the hill could have shot down every man of us before we had time to get near them.

The approach to Nisia was a surprise for me, though evidently not for Nisia. The moment we came in sight the church bells began ringing joyfully, and at the entrance to the village we found that half

the people had come forth to meet us, headed by the priest and the muktar, or headman. The school-children were all drawn up beside the road, and we halted while they sang "The Sultan's Hymn."

Consider this, Messieurs the Comitadji writers. Consider it especially, my Christian friend, for whom the Commander of the Faithful has been painted in the colours of an ogre. When the Armenian liberators took to murdering each other in the streets of Peckham perhaps you began to suspect that there might be two sides to the Armenian Question. I have never visited Armenia, and can tell you nothing on that subject ; but I have visited Rumelia, and this is what I found there.

I was the first Englishman, the people of Nisia told me, who had ever visited their village. They made a holiday, they rang their bells, and when I went away they thanked me, and told me that my visit had encouraged them. Encouraged them against whom ? Against the sovereign whose troops escorted me, and whose hymn they sang by way of greeting ? Or against the foreign bandits, wearing a foreign uniform and speaking a foreign speech, who have undertaken to bestow on them the blessings of a foreign rule ?

They sang the Sultan's praises in the hearing of his officer, it is true. But they must first have learnt that hymn. They must have practised it. Wherefore ? They had other hymns in their repertory ; they might have sung a religious one, like the school-children of Vodena, and no Turkish officer I have ever come across would have minded in the least. I cannot bring myself to believe that they chose "The Sultan's Hymn" out of deliberate hypocrisy. The Sultan was protecting them from their enemies, whether bandits from Sofia or gendarmery officers from St. Petersburg, and I am willing to believe that they were grateful.

We were led into the best house of the village, and

into an upper chamber carpeted with rugs and cushions. Cushions are the chairs of Rumelia, and if the inhabitants like them it is difficult to see why they should be urged to acquire a taste for European furniture. The only peasant house in which I found a European chair was, curiously enough, a Moslem one. My Greek dragoman was ambitious to occupy it, but I preferred the cushions.

We lunched at a round wooden table standing about nine inches above the level of the floor. The dragoman had brought provisions, and the Turkish captain shared in the repast, some of the villagers looking on.

The owner of the house gave us the story of the village, or rather the priest gave it on his behalf, translating from the Makedonski into Greek.

The village had always been Patriarchist, but a Bulgarian band descended on it and compelled the inhabitants to sign a paper declaring themselves Exarchists. Some time afterwards the band came again and demanded money. This was a more serious matter, and some of the villagers held out. They were thrashed unmercifully; our host had been laid up for two months as a result of his injuries, and it was four more before he could go about his work again.

The work of liberation was interrupted by the Turkish authorities. As my informants put it, "The whole village has now received protection, and is Patriarchist again." Ten gendarmes are stationed in the village, and neither against them nor against the soldiers had the villagers any cause of complaint.

This testimony was given in the Turkish officer's presence, but that did not appear to be much check on the speakers. They complained, before him, that they were still afraid to cultivate some of their outlying fields, and he was rather nettled by the statement, which he took as a reflection on his Government, rather than on the Bulgarians. In fact, the villagers seemed to mean it as such.

But the tribute to the good conduct of the troops and gendarmes agreed with all that I had heard elsewhere. And it was corroborated by my Greek dragoman, who inquired on his own account behind the officer's back.

I ascertained that the soldiers of our escort had brought their own bread with them. The villagers had naturally offered them something besides in the way of cheese and coffee, and I wished to pay for it. The headman made me exactly the same answer that the Greek priest had described in Salonika as the answer made by the people of his village in similar circumstances. I pressed the money on the headman of Nisia, and he finally accepted it, not at all willingly, as a "present."

Every one who knows the Greeks, every one who has had opportunities of comparing them with their neighbours, will agree with me that there could be no better evidence than this, that the villagers of Nisia were Greeks, whatever dialect they spoke.

The people of Nisia also told me that the agent of their landlord gave food to the Turkish soldiers when they visited the place. The landlord's house was pointed out to me, and the landlord himself, who used to visit the property in summer, was described to me as a good man. Clearly the seed of "freedom" had found an uncongenial soil at Nisia.

In Vodena I heard an instructive story about this landlord, who had recently died. His eldest son had run wild, and committed various excesses in the neighbourhood. Complaint was made, and as a result he was banished, in spite of the powerful influence possessed by his family at Constantinople. Returning secretly, he had joined a Bulgarian band; but, as he continued to follow the same evil courses in the Bulgarian villages, his companions murdered their Moslem recruit. In consequence of all this, the broken-hearted father was obliged to leave the district.

It is another little side-light on the liberators of Macedonia, and on the tyrants against whom they profess to be in arms. The Turk who is too bad for Turkey is welcomed by a Bulgarian band. As soon as he forgets the distinction between Patriarchists and Exarchists, he learns the difference between Turkish and Bulgarian justice.

While we were at lunch I asked the school-master, who was in the room, to give his pupils a holiday. The request was readily granted, and about ten minutes afterwards a little fellow of ten, very neatly dressed, came in to kiss my hand, and thank me on behalf of his school-fellows.

Lunch over, the captain and I took a stroll round the village. There was hardly any regular street, the houses were dotted here and there, with detached barns and outbuildings in between. It was much like a Nigerian village, and I was especially reminded of my old province by the neat little wattled huts in which the maize-cobs were stored. In Nigeria they would be yams, and the thatching would consist of canes instead of twigs.

We entered one house in which we found a wedding-party. The men performed a dance bearing some resemblance to a Scottish reel, and the bride came forward and laid a small cotton handkerchief across our left shoulders as a souvenir, in accordance with local custom. I know not how it will strike others, who believe themselves the friends of Macedonia, but to my mind the sight of that Greek village bride laying her little token of good-will on the uniform of the Sultan's officer was neither unnatural nor displeasing, and it will be hard to persuade me that it was unchristian.

But the pleasantest touch of all came while we were still at lunch. The wedding-party had resolved to serenade us, and my ears were suddenly roused by the unmistakable drone of the pipes. I sprang to my feet

and looked out of window, and there in the road below I saw a genuine bagpipe. I have previously adduced arguments which would justify the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion in seeking to annex the Koutzo-Vlachs. Surely Scotland will not look on idly while men who play the pipes are being made a bone of contention between inferior nationalities like the Greek and the Slave!

We rode away from Nisia followed by the hearty farewells of the people, and were accompanied back to Vladova by its priest, who had taken part in the reception at Nisia. On our arrival in his village we found his school-children, to the number of sixty or seventy, as I counted them, awaiting us. This time we were treated to a religious hymn, to which our escort listened with perfect good humour.

I handed a small sum to the priest for distribution among the widows and orphans, and then, hearing that there was an Exarchist widow in the place whose husband had been killed by the Greeks, I sent for her and gave her a trifle as well. This proceeding seemed to cause no slight astonishment to the Patriarchist priest, and Mr. Kalopathakes very wisely improved the occasion by pointing out to him that conciliation was a better policy than hatred. The Exarchist dame, I am bound to add, seemed equally bewildered by my eccentric action, and two Exarchist children refused to venture within my reach.

The Turkish captain seized the opportunity to drive a bargain with one of the villagers for some forage. A messenger also came in with a letter from the lieutenant who was out after the bands, for our captain to take in to the commandant at Vodena.

On the way back I had an interesting conversation with the captain, who was evidently a well-educated man, and a keen soldier. He had read many military works, and we discussed tactics, and the Boer War.

He dwelt on the difficulty of dealing with the bands, a difficulty which he compared to our own in tramping out the embers of war in South Africa. The greatest difficulty of all was to distinguish the Comitadji from the peaceful cultivator.

"If we speak to them in one language they pretend not to know it, and reply in another. They hide their rifles when they see us coming, and when we get up to them they say, 'We are peasants.' What can we do?"

By way of climax to the situation, I learned that some of the soldiers in the escort were Macedonian Bulgars. And the captain told me that the Christian recruits gave satisfaction.

On our return to Vodena I questioned my friend the Archbishop on the subject of the Turkish soldiery, and he confirmed all that I had been told before. The soldiers made no exactions in the villages. They had been behaving particularly well for the last year or two.

I asked if this improvement were due to the presence and influence of the foreign officers. He said no, it was the result of complaints made to the Government in Constantinople; that is to say, to the Sultan.

My Christian friend, has it ever occurred to you that it might be a better way to serve the Christian subjects of Abdul Hamid II. to appeal to him direct on the subject of their real or fancied grievances, than to write furious invectives against him on account of things of which he may be perfectly ignorant?

No sovereign, however well intentioned, can know all that goes on in remote corners of his dominions. Even the British voter is not omniscient. I have heard ugly stories about things done in our own distant provinces: of natives beaten and robbed by our own soldiers; of eyes poked out by the canes of our own officers; of native chiefs required to purvey women for our representatives. We will hope they



are untrue stories. But if the agents of six foreign Powers, including the two who most covet our possessions, were at liberty to prowl over India and Africa, inviting complaints from Moslems and Hindus and pagans, they might not find it very difficult to draw up an indictment which would not be pleasant reading for the Balkan Committee.

## CHAPTER X

### A TURKISH TOWN

A Macedonian hotel—An Albanian bey—A witness above suspicion  
—The correspondent of *The Times*—Fairy statistics—A Turkish  
schoolmaster—The liberation of Florina

THE next town on my itinerary was Florina, in the heart of the disturbed region. It has a larger Turkish population than most of the others, the figures given to me by the Greek Archbishop being: Moslems 5,978, Patriarchists 2,294, and Exarchists 669.

Florina stands a long way from the railway. We were met at the station, as usual, by the police, who had had the forethought to order a carriage for me—an attention for which they were duly insulted by the dragoman.

It was a dreary drive through the darkness to the town, though the road was good enough; but we were cheered up by the prospect of finding a really good hotel when we arrived. We had heard the praises of this hostelry beforehand. Its name was, if I recollect rightly, the *Grand Hôtel de Salonique*.

The Grand Hotel of Salonika proved to be a small green-grocer's shop, with a very comfortless back-room to serve as bar, restaurant, and drawing-room, and a few bare and draughty rooms overhead containing beds and little more. The Rumelian inn bedroom always contains as many beds as can be got into it, but I followed the European practice of sleeping in only one. As it happened, my sleep in

the inn at Florina nearly proved my last. A charcoal brazier had been introduced into the room to warm it. I had closed the window, against which the head of the bed was placed, to avoid influenza, and in consequence I had a narrow escape of suffocation. I awoke just in time. It is fair to add that at no time during the journey was I attacked by insects—an escape which ought perhaps to be attributed partly to the season of the year.

We took supper off the food we had brought with us, in the room below, at a small table, keeping on our overcoats, as the stove was monopolised by local patrons of the house. It was a sad come-down after the hospitality of Vodena, and I should be glad to avenge myself on the governor and Archbishop of Florina. But of the kaimakam I could gather only good accounts, and the Archbishop had his own reasons for distrusting English visitors, as will appear hereafter.

If there is one figure more prominent in Comitadji literature than the terrible Turk, it is the Albanian bey. This being is supposed to unite in himself the many vices of the aristocrat and the infidel, the landowner and the brigand. During my journey I was destined to encounter one specimen of this formidable class, and I shall describe him exactly as I found him.

When we alighted at the Florina station I had noticed a small, meek-looking youth in a fez, who had emerged from a second or third class carriage. While we were at supper he crept into the room, and took his seat rather timidly at the adjoining table, where he was served with a very meagre refectation. Mr. Kalopathakes, taking compassion on the forlorn young man, fell into conversation with him, and he admitted that he was an Albanian bey.

The ruffian was far from glorying in his fearful renown. On the contrary, in his prejudiced view, it was the Bulgarian peasant and his Comitadji protectors who were the terrors of the country-side.

The bey owned a small farm in the neighbourhood of Florina, and he had come in some trepidation to collect his rent. The system on which the farm was cultivated was precisely the same as that prevailing on Mr. Kalopathakes' own estate in the Peloponnese; that is to say, the landlord bore all the expenses and shared the produce with the tenants. The Albanian bey complained bitterly of the cunning and dishonesty of the peasants, who habitually defrauded him in the division. He was a poor man, earning his livelihood as a clerk at Jannina, with an aged mother to support, and the profits of this farm were a serious matter to him. As it was, he seemed afraid to go in person to demand them, and I understood that he meant to remain in Florina, and send out an agent to bring away whatever his tenants were disposed to allow him out of their harvest.

Of course I must not be understood as offering this unfortunate youth as a type of all Albanian beys. He happened to be the only one I came across. I regret, in the interest of the sensation-loving reader, that I was not more fortunate. An Albanian bey attired in the national costume, with a belt stuck round with daggers and pistols, and a yataghan moist with blood, galloping on to some other person's land at the head of an armed troop, all breathing fire and slaughter against the cowering Christian peasant, would have furnished a picturesque episode, and would have been instantly and unanimously recognised as a true portrait.

The proprietor of the Grand Hotel of Salonika turned out to be a *Lame Welshman*, who considered himself to be a Greek. He told us that he had refused offers of money to let himself be called a Rumanian. He further stated that he allowed no Bulgarians to enter his hotel. I asked him why, and he said he was afraid of their throwing bombs.

Most of the customers in the room appeared to be Turks. But there was one man present who spoke

excellent Greek, and who told us that he hailed from a village in the neighbourhood named Klabasnitza. It contains sixty-four houses, not one of them Bulgarian, and the Bulgarians have announced their intention to destroy it. The people speak Macedonian among themselves, but understand Greek as well. I gathered that the Greek sentiment was particularly strong there from the man's concluding words: "He wished that King George would come that way."

But I was about to receive a far more striking and disinterested testimony to the widespread influence of Hellas. It was in the dingy saloon of the Grand Hotel of Salonika that I came upon the one witness whom the worst enemies of Greece will hardly accuse of being terrorised by the bands of Athens, or corrupted by Patriarchist gold. Seated with its back to me on a neighbouring bench, I remarked the figure of a cat. I hailed it in Turkish, the prevailing language of the town, and it paid no attention. I tried it in Vlach, and I tried it in Bulgarian, with the same result. Finally I pronounced the Hellenic *gata*. The cat immediately turned its head, rose up, and walked towards me, to the unbounded delight of its proprietor.

I must apologise for including this comic episode among so many tragic ones, and only hope that I shall not draw down on the innocent animal the vengeance of Sofia.

I called the next morning upon the Greek Archbishop, and found him in the act of writing a letter to *The Times*.

It appeared that the correspondent of that journal had paid a visit to the town some time before. He had placed himself exclusively in the hands of the Bulgarian faction and the foreign gendarmery officer, ignoring equally the Metropolitan of the diocese and the Turkish governor. After his visit some rather ludicrous statistics had appeared in the columns of his paper. The organ of the Patriarch had already

given a partial correction of these, but even the Patriarch's figures were not quite accurate, and the Archbishop was preparing an exact statement to be sent to Constantinople, the law or etiquette of the Orthodox Church forbidding him to address himself directly to a foreign newspaper.

This was not the first time I had heard of the correspondent of *The Times*, nor of this particular article. In Athens I found that *The Times* was regarded as an enemy of Hellas scarcely less formidable than the Principality of Bulgaria. In Constantinople a member of the Mixed Synod of the Patriarchate had called on me on purpose to remonstrate with me about the Florina letter, for which he clearly held me responsible.

In the eyes of most foreigners *The Times* enjoys a consideration eclipsing even the legendary glories of the Lord Mayor of London. It is regarded as one of our great national institutions, ranking second only to the House of Commons. Its favourable sentence is more valued than that of all other journals put together; its condemnation is a national calamity. Such a reputation could not have been won and maintained so long unless it were generally deserved, and that reflection alone should teach my Hellenic friends to be cautious in their complaints of the great English journal.

Unfortunately *The Times* differs in one respect from the House of Commons in that it is not representative. On the Continent there is a disposition to ignore that fact, and to treat every English traveller as though he were the editor of *The Times*, and personally to blame for its misdeeds. I have so often been called on to defend *The Times*—a paper from which I have never myself received anything but fair play and courtesy—that I shall use the liberty of writing of it as being in truth a national institution whose good fame must be dear to every Englishman.

Needless to say, I was able to estimate at their

right value the Oriental reasons assigned for the attitude of *The Times* towards the Hellenist cause. The correspondent of *The Times* had received a breastpin from Prince Ferdinand. The correspondent of *The Times* was drawing a secret honorarium of £10,000 a year<sup>1</sup> from the Bulgarian Government. The correspondent of *The Times* had been caricatured in an Athenian newspaper. And so forth, and so on.

I am none the less bound to add that, in my opinion, the local correspondent of *The Times* has not always shown that scrupulous care to avoid even the appearance of one-sidedness which is desirable in a time of such bitter jealousy. It is not desirable that *The Times* should have to insert corrections from the Turkish Embassy in London, to the effect that outrages attributed by its correspondent to Greek bands were really the work of Bulgarians. I happened to notice for myself that the report of the trial of the men who tried to kidnap Colonel Elliott contained the statement that three of the prisoners came from a Greek village, which was named, and the whole telegram was calculated to leave a careless reader ignorant that he was reading of a Bulgarian crime. The Florina letter persistently avoided the use of the word Bulgarian, the annexationist bands being described as "the peasants," and the impression conveyed certainly being that the peaceable population was being provoked to retaliation by the Greek enemy. I have already produced ample evidence that the exact contrary is the case, the Greeks having come in answer to appeals for protection from peasants harassed by their Bulgarian liberators.

With these remarks, which are in no way intended as a reflection on the personal good faith of the correspondent, I will proceed to the correction I have been requested to make by the Archbishop of Florina.

<sup>1</sup> This princely figure was actually named to me by one complainant. It might excite envy in the most popular novelist.

According to the information accepted by *The Times'* correspondent, there are in the caza of Florina eighty-four Christian villages, of which only nine are Patriarchist, the other seventy-five being Exarchist; that is to say, Bulgarised.

According to the Archbishop of the diocese (which is not quite conterminous with the Turkish caza), there are in the caza only seventy-one villages in all. Of these twelve are entirely Moslem. Another sixteen are partly Moslem and partly Christian. The number of purely Christian villages is not eighty-four but forty-three.

Of the purely Christian villages, twenty-eight are Patriarchist, their names being :

CRAPESTINA	LAGHENE	TIRSIA
PISODERI	KOUTSCHKOVENI	PETORAK
KLABASNITCHA	LESKOVITCH	ROSNA
CALIMI (upper)	CLADORAPI	LAZENA
CALIMI (lower)	ELOVON	NEVESKA
NEGOVANI <sup>1</sup>	BELKAMENI	CRUSERAT
SETINA	BATCH	GORNITSOVON
RAHMANLI	HASSANOVON	DOBROVEN
SOVITCH	PAPADIE	CHERECHOVON
ZABIRDENI		

There are nine villages of mixed Exarchists and Patriarchists. The number of purely Exarchist villages is not seventy-five, but six.

In addition, there are Exarchists in eleven of the mixed Moslem and Christian villages. Let us add together all the villages in which any Exarchists are to be found, and work out the sum by fairy arithmetic

The Bulgarian figures	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	75
The Archbishop's	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	26
								<hr/>
								2)101
								<hr/>
								50.5

I went round to the Konak, and submitted the

<sup>1</sup> Burnt by "the peasants" since the Florina letter.



Archbishop's figures to the kaimakam. He sent for the official register, went through the names under my eye, and gave me a result differing but slightly, and differing chiefly by treating some of the mixed villages as purely Moslem. Here is his account :

#### CAZA OF FLORINA

Purely Moslem villages . . . . .	21
Mixed Moslem and Christian . . . . .	9
Purely Patriarchist . . . . .	27
Purely Exarchist . . . . .	9
Mixed Patriarchist and Exarchist . . . . .	5
	<hr/>
	71

The two authorities agree, within one, as to the number of Patriarchist villages. They agree exactly as to the total for the caza.

According to the information given to *The Times* the caza contains eighty-four Christian villages, without counting the Moslem ones. Is it to be believed that a Turkish governor is ignorant of the existence of at least two dozen villages in his own department, villages which it is his duty and his interest to tax? The religion of the Christian villages may be a matter of controversy in some cases, but it is incredible that from twelve to thirty should be omitted altogether from the official register of the caza.

The precise number of villages in a given area of Rumelia is of the smallest possible importance. But such a discrepancy as that between seventy-five and nine Bulgarian villages can hardly be explained as a pure inadvertence. Errors so gross reflect upon the whole of the information accepted by the same correspondent from the same sources on the same occasion, and perhaps from similar sources on other occasions. One is tempted to express the wish that *The Times* should be more reliable than "Brancoff."

In company with the Metropolitan, I went to inspect

the Greek school of Florina. This school has a handsome endowment, by virtue of which it maintains sixty beds for orphans and poor lads from the villages of the diocese. The day happened to be the English Christmas, and, taking courage from my success at Nisia, I ventured to demand a holiday for the boys. The request was readily granted, and I was taken on to the girls' school, a new and handsome building, where I was encouraged to make a similar petition.

Stimulated by these successes, I resolved to enfranchise the entire juvenile population of Florina. I went round to the Bulgarian school, a rather small, poverty-stricken place, and secured a holiday for the young Bulgars. Then I bent my steps towards their oppressors.

I was received at the Turkish institution by the most delightful figure I had met in all Rumelia, a white-turbaned figure straight out of *The Arabian Nights*. He must have been a Syrian or Arab. His smile was like moonlight on the water, and his bow was like the crescent moon. He led me from class-room to class-room with the grace of a court chamberlain. When I proffered my demand for a holiday, he explained that the school was just closing for the day, but he smilingly consented to release his pupils for the morrow.

The Turkish school was decidedly the cleanest, airiest, and best kept of the three. I may sum up my general impression of the schools of Rumelia by saying that I consider the Greek schools give the most advanced education and the Turkish schools are the best regulated as regards health and comfort. The Rumanian and Servian schools are well-conducted charities. The Bulgarians are doing their best to imitate the Greeks as regards education, but they are handicapped by want of funds, and the result is a little depressing.

I went back to my inn feeling that my Christmas Day in Rumelia had been well spent. In the after-

noon the whole town was full of excited school-boys ; probably this was their first experience of the kind. I hope the "English Pasha" left a pleasant memory behind him. The Comitadjis might liberate Macedonia if they could—I was the liberator of Florina !

## CHAPTER XI

### THE HEART OF TURKEY IN EUROPE

Fairy geography—The Bulgarian conquest—A new test of nationality—Sabbath-breaking—The Sultan's idea of education—The religious difficulty solved in Turkey—A page of *The Arabian Nights*—In the military college—Relations between Turks and Europeans—Turkey's appeal to England.

THE town known officially as Bitolia, and ecclesiastically as Pelagonia, but nowadays more commonly called Monastir, lies in the middle of the vilayet of the same name, and in the middle of Rumelia. It is half-way between the frontiers of Servia and Bulgaria in the north and of Greece in the south, half-way between the Aegean and the Adriatic seas. Here is the vexed centre of the whirlpool; round Monastir the Folk War rages fiercely, and in the town all the opposed nationalities have their camps.

The population of the entire vilayet, according to the official estimate, is nearly a million, made up as follows :

Moslems . . . . .	480,018
Greeks . . . . .	261,283
Bulgarians . . . . .	178,412
	<u>919,713</u>

The figures obligingly furnished to me by Mr. Dobreff, the Bulgarian agent in Monastir, read rather differently :

Bulgarians (Exarchists) . . . . .	302,000
Bulgarians (Grecomanics) . . . . .	60,000
Bulgarians (Servomanics) . . . . .	18,000
All others . . . . .	320,000
	<u>700,000</u>

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The discrepancy between these totals seems to be due, not to fairy arithmetic, but to fairy geography. Mr. Dobreff omits four out of the fourteen cazas comprised in the vilayet, on the ground that they do not contain any Bulgars. If we assign to the omitted cazas a population of 200,000 the figures will tally fairly well, and the vilayet as a whole will show a slight Moslem majority :

Moslems . . . . .	480,018
Christians . . . . .	439,695
	<u>40,323</u>

Mr. Dobreff's figures must be considered moderate from his point of view, inasmuch as they leave the Bulgars in a considerable minority even in the Bulgarian cazas, if we deduct the "maniacs" :

Moslems, etc. . . . .	320,000	
"Maniacs" . . . . .	<u>78,000</u>	398,000
Bulgars, not "maniacs" . . . . .		<u>302,000</u>
		<u>96,000</u>

Such figures hardly present a very strong case for the annexation of the vilayet as a whole to the Principality of Bulgaria.

But the important discrepancy is that between the different figures for the sane Bulgars ; that is to say, the Exarchists :

Bulgarian estimate . . . . .	302,000
Official estimate . . . . .	178,412
	<u>123,588</u>

The Turkish Government, and even the Christian Powers, have refused to recognise conversions to the Exarchate made by violence during the last five or six years. The difference of 123,588 may therefore be taken to represent the number of Macedonian Christians who have succumbed during the reign of terror. It is the net achievement of the Comitadjis to date, in the vilayet of Monastir.

It will be instructive to compare these figures with those for the town of Monastir. The official census gives the total population, in round numbers, as 40,000. The Bulgars, or Exarchists, according to Mr. Dobreff, amount to 10,000. The Greeks, or Patriarchists, according to the figures supplied to me by their Bishop, number 15,000, made up of these diverse elements:

Hellenes . . . . .	1,496
Albanians . . . . .	1,372
Koutzo-Vlachs . . . . .	4,711
Bulgar-speaking . . . . .	5,155
Mixed . . . . .	2,333
	<u>15,067</u>

Nothing could be more candid than this admission that the Hellenes, by speech, amount to one-tenth of the Bishop's flock. It has often been alleged that the Greeks are strong in the towns, while the rural population is almost entirely Bulgar. But here we have a town in which the Greeks by speech are an insignificant fraction, but in which the Greeks by sentiment nevertheless outnumber the Bulgars by three to two. And the reason is not far to seek. It is because the town is free from the influence of the terrorists. It is not urban pursuits that make the Greek: it is urban security. And it is not agricultural pursuits that make the Exarchist: it is fire and the sword.

As I shall show hereafter, very little confidence can be placed in any estimate of the rural population of this country, even when it proceeds from an impartial source, because of the manner in which it is arrived at. The official census is always taken by houses, and the method followed, even by authorities like M. Bérard, is to multiply the number of houses by five, and give the result as the population. That proportion may be fairly accurate for the towns, but it is quite misleading for the smaller villages. The

"house," in rural Macedonia, is a term rather sociological than architectural. It stands for a group of kinsmen, perhaps containing half a dozen families, and two or three generations, all dwelling together and leading a common life under a patriarchal head. Should a thorough census ever be taken the result may contain surprises for all parties; and it will probably show that the Slave-speaking element is stronger than is commonly supposed, and the Moslem element considerably weaker in proportion.

There is a test of nationality which has not yet been applied to Macedonia, though it is in constant use in Ireland—that of names. In an Irish revision court the Nationalist agent objects as a matter of course to a voter whose name is Smith or Jones, without thinking it necessary to inquire further; and the Unionist agent is almost equally sure to object to a Mac or an O'.

While going over the Greek high school of Monastir, I happened to notice a class register, containing about forty names, lying open on the master's desk, and I asked that a copy might be made for me in order that I might see what light it threw on the boys' nationality. My request reached the ears of the Greek Bishop, and inspired him with a resolution. Perhaps he had heard of "Brancoff"; perhaps he only wished to impress me with the zeal of his people, and their anxiety that the truth should reach the ears of England. He set the schoolmasters to work, and before I left Monastir I received a complete list containing the names of every boy and girl attending a Greek school in the town, to the number of 2,385, arranged under their schools and classes. It was a touch of genuine Hellenic enthusiasm; and it is perhaps the one trustworthy sample of statistics that I obtained in Fairyland.

I transcribe the names for which I asked originally, as they have been analysed for me by a Greek friend.



FUNERAL PROCESSION AT MONASTIR OF SIX GREEK ANTARTES KILLED BY THE TURKISH TROOPS.

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LIST OF PUPILS OF THE 2ND FORM OF THE GREEK  
GYMNASIUM AT MONASTIR, MACEDONIA.*Winter Term, 1907-8**Hellenic Names*

Georgios G. Photiades.  
 Kyriacos N. Lucas.  
 Stavro J. Sergiades.  
 Anastasios J. Angelas.  
 Christos Dimitriou.  
 Anastasios S. Minas.  
 Alexander K. Oeconomou.  
 Stravros Stravrides.  
 Thomas J. Vizinis.  
 Evangelhos Pappasoteriou.  
 Thomas Theofanous.  
 Demetrius Pappasotiriou.  
 Thomas Tamatopoulos.  
 Evangelhos Spyrou.  
 Demetrius Triantafillou.  
 Alexander Grigoriou.  
 Michael Diamantides.  
 Georgios Dimitriou.  
 Naoum G. Anghelou.  
 Memetrius Constantinou.  
 Constantine Rouffas.  
 Xenophon Johannides.  
 Georgios Panos.

Stephanos Dimopoulos.  
 Nicolaos Chronis.

*Albanian Names*

Evangelhos G. Sourlas.  
 Georgios Naoum Tsamos.  
 Constantine Moulas.

*Slavonic Name*

Anastasios Naoum.

*Græco-Slavonic Name*

Alexander Pappanaoum.

*Latin Names (Græco-Koutzo-  
Vlachs)*

Alexander Zallis.  
 Zisis Siempis.  
 Michael Valiozis.  
 Nicolaos Nousiaos.  
 Margharitis Nallis.  
 Michael Naris.  
 Athanasios Gegnasis.  
 Demetrius Santis.  
 Athanasios Sountis.

It will be seen that this test yields results much more favourable to Hellenism than the one of language, and it might be interesting to apply it on a more extensive scale. Its value is subject to the qualification that many of the surnames are baptismal names, as is so often the case in Wales; and most of the popular baptismal names are Greek, owing to the custom of naming a child after the saint on whose festival the child is born. The strongly Hellenist character of the Christian calendar must be attributed rather to historical causes than to the superior sanctity of the Greeks. But while names are not a certain proof of descent, they are much better evidence than language. At the least they are respectable testimony to the

influence of the Greek Church over this population. Where races and religions are so hopelessly entangled it seems more and more clear that the only satisfactory test to apply is that required by the elementary principles of Liberalism, of Christianity, and of international jurisprudence, namely, free consent.

The town of Monastir lies in one of those broad basins, surrounded by mountains, and alternating with noble lakes, that give to Macedonia the character of a honeycomb of which some cells are empty and some are full. A small river runs through the town in a channel which has been walled on both sides, and the quays have been planted with trees so as to form a promenade. There is also a respectable street leading towards the railway station, and an hotel not quite up to the European standard.

The day after my arrival I called on the Governor-General, whom I found being lectured by one of the Consuls. The newspapers sent to the Italian gendarmery officers had been delayed in the post, no doubt by the action of the censorship. The vali promised that they should be spared for the future, and his visitor departed.

I applied to his Excellency for permission to inspect the Turkish schools of the town, and he at once sent for the Director of Public Instruction to make the necessary arrangements. I was invited to fix a day for my visits, and thoughtlessly said "To-morrow." A traveller is apt to lose touch with the calendar, and I had unpardonably overlooked the fact that the next day was Friday. Neither the vali nor the director of instruction reminded me that I had chosen the Mohammedan Sabbath, and the director arranged to come to my hotel the next morning and take me round.

It was not till we were in the carriage the next day on our way to the schools that the director, Saib Effendi, courteously explained that I should not find the full tale of scholars in attendance, on account of

the day I had chosen. I felt very much distressed, and was only partly relieved by a promise that those pupils who had been required to attend on my account should receive a holiday on another day.

It was, of course, evident to me by this time that my mission had attracted attention in very high quarters, and that instructions had been sent from Constantinople that I was to have every facility for seeing whatever I wished of Turkey and her institutions. But even such instructions were not sufficient to account for the extraordinary attention of opening three Moslem schools on a Friday, rather than request me to choose another day for my inspection. There was another reason, which I was to learn afterwards.

The first institution I was taken to see was the Idadie, or Civil School, a handsome building standing hard by the Konak. I was received by the director of the school, and, his staff, which includes a medical officer, and, after receiving full information as to its character, I was shown all over the building, seeing class-rooms, dormitories, refectory, and infirmary.

It would not be fair to institute a comparison between a public school supported by the Government and those maintained by the voluntary efforts of the Christian communities. It is therefore no disparagement of the others to say that the Idadie was the best school I had yet seen in Rumelia, as regards externals. What impressed me most favourably were the perfect order and cleanliness prevailing throughout. In the dormitories the beds were rather closely packed together—there were three rows in each room—but they were in apple-pie order, each with its red blanket smoothly folded; and all the windows stood wide open, so that the atmosphere was sweet and clean. In each room there was a bed for a master, and I was shown a tell-tale machine to ensure the periodical visits during the night of the superintendent

on duty. A Jesuit seminary could not have been more carefully regulated.

The Civil School is so called because it has been founded to train lads for the Civil Service. It is not one of the recent reforms imposed on Turkey from without, nor does it enjoy the approval and support of Europeans. It has been in existence twenty years, and it is due to the personal initiative of the present Sultan.

It has 350 pupils in all, of whom 140 are boarders. The day-boys receive their education entirely free. Of the boarders 44 are wholly supported by the State. The remainder pay £10 (£12 Turkish) a year for their board, lodging, education, and clothes. The pupils wear a handsome uniform, and the £10 is considered as meeting the expense of clothing. With that trifling deduction, the whole of the scholars are upon a free footing—a state of things for which it would be hard to find a parallel under any Christian Government.

The day-school is open to any boy who chooses to attend it. The boarders are selected for their intelligence, the poorest being admitted without payment of any kind. They remain in the school till they are old enough to be drafted into the Government service, in which posts are found for the most deserving.

The institution enjoys a freedom from religious exclusiveness of which few Christian countries have any idea—which may even offend the consciences of some English Christians. The day-school is open to Christians equally with Moslems. The number of Christians who take advantage of it is extremely small, but this is due to their own fanaticism. A Greek father whom I afterwards questioned on the subject answered that his boy would let himself be killed rather than go to the Civil School.

Among the 100 boarders who pay the £10 are 30 Bulgars. Of the 44 who pay nothing 18 are

Christians, 7 Greeks, 7 Bulgars, 3 Serbs, 1 Vlach. There are also 4 Moslems from Bosnia.

Within the school itself the most perfect tolerance prevails. The Christian boarders are required to attend their own churches on Sunday, and during the week they are sent to receive religious instruction at a school of their own faith, whose master is paid by the Government for teaching them.

But there is more than toleration—a hateful word—there is consideration. As the director of the school led me through the class-rooms he pointed out this boy as a Moslem and that as a Greek, this as a Bulgar and that as a Turk; and neither boys nor master showed the slightest false pride or false shame. I tried to imagine the Anglican headmaster of an English public school being asked to receive young Wesleyans and Baptists among his pupils, and to send them to their own schools for religious instruction. And I failed to imagine it. I tried to imagine him conducting a foreign Nonconformist over his school, and pointing with genuine satisfaction and good-will to the Nonconformists in his charge. And I failed again.<sup>1</sup>

The director of the Idadie assured me that his Moslem pupils treated their Giaour comrades "like brothers." A few days later I was visiting the school to which the Bulgarian boys are sent for religious instruction, and I asked the Bulgarian master how these boys were treated by the young Turks. He replied, "Like brothers." From a Greek friend I heard an anecdote showing that the same happy relations prevail in other colleges established by the Sultan. A Moslem and a Greek had contracted a strong friendship as fellow-pupils in the Government school of Smyrna. The holidays

<sup>1</sup> A friend of my own, an Austrian count residing in England, desired to place his son at a famous public school. The headmaster, without actually refusing the boy, said that the inconvenience of allowing him Catholic privileges would be so great that he "advised" the father to place him in a Roman institution.

arrived, and the Turk went off to his home near the Caucasus, where he fell dangerously ill. The news came to Smyrna, and the young Greek, too poor to travel at his own expense, begged or borrowed the necessary funds to go right across Asia Minor to the bedside of his sick friend—who happily recovered.

When I was leaving the Idadie I could not refrain from saying to its director, "You have solved a difficulty that has not yet been solved in England. You have shown that it is possible to bring up boys of different faiths together, and to teach them to live in accord."

In addition, the Turks have solved the problem of giving moral instruction apart from controversial theology. I found the boys in one class receiving a lesson in ethics. I took the book out of the hands of one of them, and got the director to translate a passage into French. It happened to be about *gaspillage*. The book explained the difference between liberality and extravagance, and warned the young reader against being a spendthrift.

It must be difficult indeed for any English Non-conformist who has ever heard of the Civil School of Monastir to refuse a tribute of respect to the sovereign whose views on education it embodies. But who has ever heard of it? To me I think it came as a greater surprise than anything I saw in the Turkish empire; and, unless I am much mistaken, it will come as an equal surprise to most of my readers. But the person whom it ought to surprise most is that authority on Macedonia in whose book I find the following sage suggestion:

"A university college where young men of all races and creeds could be trained together under European professors might do much, as Midhat Pasha saw, to break down the barriers which at present divide Moslems and Christians, Greeks and Bulgarians."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Macedonia*, by H. N. Brailsford, p. 328.

The author of this amazing proposal, put forward as a reform for Europe to press upon the Sultan, must have passed the Idadie fifty times without once going inside the door.

It is my least agreeable, but not my least important, duty to report on the reporters on whom England depends for information. When I tried to relate to one of them what I had seen of the Government schools, he rejoined, "Oh yes, I believe the Sultan likes it to be thought that he is nuts on education."

I print the coarse sneer in his own coarse language as an illustration, by no means an unfair one, of the frame of mind which is responsible for half the troubles of Turkey. The speaker had spent a year in the country and had never visited a Turkish school. If the Sultan created his noble foundations in the hope of winning the good opinion of the Consuls he grievously miscalculated the strength of European prejudice.

From the Idadie I was taken on to a primary school, presided over by a turbaned master. The turban is the clerical badge, and the director of education apologised for the comparative inferiority of the education given here by explaining that the primary schools were still in the hands of the priests. Other countries further west could echo this remark.

And then he took me to see a girls' school. Of all the wonders that had awaited me in Fairyland this was surely the most wonderful. A Turkish girls' school, kept open on the Turkish Sabbath to receive a visit from a man, a foreigner, and an infidel! What do we really know of Turkey, or of Abdul Hamid II.?

I was received by mistresses in long black veils, who feigned to scoop up dust from the ground and place it on their heads in token of abasement. I was received by unveiled Greek assistants, who had the hardihood to shake me by the hand. I was received



by unveiled little girls who were openly amused and curious, and by elder ones whose thoughts were hidden from me behind the same shrouds as their mistresses wore.

And I was shown embroideries—marvellous silken embroideries of flowers, the like of which were not to be seen in any mere Christian school. It was a vision, a glimpse of Asia, a page of the history of Harun the Just bound up in twentieth-century covers, and offered for my perusal by the Caliph Abdul Hamid Alraschid.

On another day I was taken to see the Military School, a building as well equipped as the Idadie. Its director, Lieutenant-Colonel Nouri Bey, was a man of singularly refined and sympathetic manner, one of those Turks who make one doubt the superiority of Europe.

Before taking me over the school he showed me a number of photographs of the building and of the pupils at their exercises. It is the camera, I imagine, which has had the greatest part in breaking down the old Mohammedan taboo against pictures of human and animal forms. In Constantinople I found in the shop-windows a picture postcard of one of the young princes, and while I was there the Sultan ordered a photograph to be taken of the Bairam reception, with himself as the principal figure.

The Austrian War Office has been significantly busy quite recently on a map of Macedonia, but the result is more remarkable for size than accuracy. I mentioned to Nouri Bey one or two errors in it which I had detected as I came along, and he told me there were many others. He produced a smaller Turkish map, in pale green, which he said was more reliable, and his opinion of it has since been confirmed to me in impartial quarters.

I was next taken into the three senior class-rooms, where the director insisted on my examining the

pupils. The first class was studying strategy, and a question on one of Wellington's campaigns in the Peninsula proved too much for the pupils, but elicited from the instructor an accurate résumé of the retreat on Torres Vedras, illustrated by a sketch-map. The next class was engaged on military cartography, and one of the students sketched out a defensive position on the blackboard very readily. In the third class a lad was called up to write a model despatch reporting the arrival of a hostile force at a certain point. I suggested that the despatch should state the direction from which the enemy had come, and the addition was promptly made.

It was a curious sequel to my one experience as a soldier to find myself catechising in a Turkish military school. I have not that acquaintance with schools of a similar kind elsewhere which would enable me to form a judgment on this one, but it was at any rate evident that no pains were being spared.

Before I left Colonel Nouri took me into the armoury, where he showed me rifles which had been manufactured in Constantinople, and bore the Sultan's monogram. I also remarked some targets in the shape of dummy soldiers—another infraction of the strict letter of the Koran. The dummies wore red fezzes, and I ventured to remind my host that in real warfare the opposing force were not likely to be so distinguished. He took the criticism in very good part. But I am surprised that the Turkish troops themselves have not yet adopted a fez of a less conspicuous colour for war or active service. If ever they march into battle against a serious enemy with their present headgear the slaughter is likely to be appalling.

I found no Christians in the Military School. Whether any would enter it if they were invited to do so is very doubtful, but at present they do not seem to be invited. On the other hand, no one is excluded on account of poverty. The education is

free; and perhaps an army whose officers are not chosen according to the length of the parental purse has an advantage which may serve to counterbalance the disadvantage of the fez.

The remarkable zeal with which the Turkish authorities had responded to my request to visit their schools had led me to suspect that it was one not often made to them, as I see on reference to my notes. When we were driving away from the Military School I sounded my companion, the Director of Public Instruction:

"Is it usual to allow European men to visit your girls' schools?"

The answer startled me not a little.

"*You are the first European who has ever asked to see our schools.* All the other Europeans who have come here—French, English, Germans—treat us as if we did not exist. They make a formal call on the vali; and then they go off with the Greeks, or with the Bulgars, and never come near us again. They ignore the Turkish element in the population altogether. Why," he burst out, his emotion visibly overcoming him, "why do they treat us like that? They despise us, as though we were savage beasts!—we are human beings. They never make friends with us. The Consuls never come near us. They will not associate with us. We know we have faults. We are trying to improve. We want to earn the good opinion of Europe. Why will they not give us a chance?"

I tried to soothe his agitation. I promised that I would do my share towards promoting a more tolerant feeling. I praised the school we had just visited, and told him that if I had a son I should be proud to entrust him to its director.

"*Merci*," he said, in a choked voice.

That expression of feeling was all the more remark-

able because my companion was himself an Albanian, and, according to the class of authorities whom I may be excused from quoting further, the Albanians entertained just that feeling of scorn for the Turks against which my Albanian friend was protesting. I can only repeat once more that I have to describe things as I found them. Pure truth may not be within the power of mortal vision, but I will hope that the lens of sympathy is less distorting than the lens of spite.

I must go on to say that, in my opinion, the complaint against the Consuls is, in this particular, undeserved. It is on the Turks themselves that I must cast the chief blame for the lack of social intercourse between them and Europeans. It takes two to make a friendship, and, whether from fear or from the difference of national manners, the Turks on the whole do not exert themselves to welcome the stranger within their gates so much as do other nationalities.

I need scarcely remark that I point this out in no unfriendly spirit. I have no doubt that the Turks suffer seriously from this isolation; but, as with the Jews, I find that they have built their own ghetto, and shut the door upon themselves.

I will add further, and again with no unkindly feeling, that it is partly the fault of the Turks that so little is known of the better side of their government. They have done practically nothing to dispel the ignorance of Europe, and the prejudice based on that ignorance. They may be pardoned for adopting a sullen attitude towards the ordinary European who comes amongst them with his mind made up, and his verdict against them already framed. But even a fair and sympathetic visitor to Turkey is left to search out for himself what is creditable to the Turks, without much assistance from them. Such an attitude is in striking contrast with that of the Christians, who are eager to draw the visitor's attention to whatever is likely to impress him favourably. The difference is like that between the little girl dressed for her first party,

and showing off to everybody her new sash and the rosettes on her shoes, and the little boy trying to hide his new clothes, for fear of being pinched by his school-fellows. I am sorry for the man who cannot sympathise with both, but there is no question which is the better policy.

Before leaving Monastir I was honoured by a call from the Governor-General, who brought his own interpreter. He said to me that the Turks as a nation were good-hearted, and that they would make rapid progress in the arts of civilisation and good government if they were supported by England.

It happened to be the very thing which had been said to me, at a time when I had no expectation of ever travelling in Turkey, by a valued friend whose husband was British Consul at Jerusalem during the Crimean War. In her view, as in that of his Excellency, the worst troubles of the Turkish empire are due to interested interference from outside. It is the Powers who hope to benefit by the break-up of the empire who perpetually stir up its subjects to revolt, in order that they may find a pretext for intervention. It is the same Powers who discourage every effort at reform on the part of the Turks, in order that they may proclaim to the world that the Turks are incapable of reform.

Such is the Turkish case. There is another side to it, no doubt, and I do not feel that my present knowledge of the situation justifies me in offering an opinion as to which is right.

The policy actually pursued by England in recent years has been to confine herself to giving advice, well-meant, if not always good, advice, while allowing the real control to pass into the hands of the very Powers most interested in preventing that advice from being taken.

The Power most interested in the Macedonian vilayets is Austria. In spite of Gladstone's memorable

warning, it becomes more and more evident that if neither Turks, Greeks, nor Bulgars can put a stop to the existing state of anarchy, the public conscience of Europe will insist on a mandate being given to Austria to come in and pacify the region. And if Austria comes she is not likely to go again. The longer I stayed in the country the most strongly it was borne in upon me that this would be the inevitable end of the matter. I warned the Bulgars, I warned the Greeks, and I warned the Turks, that Austria was on the way; and I had hardly got back to Athens when the news arrived that Austria was throwing a railway across the frontier.

In making these observations I have no desire to reflect on the good faith of the Austrian Government. I feel, however, that the essential conditions of the problem have not been changed; that the task before the Turkish reformers is long, difficult, and doubtful; and that England has never had a finer opportunity to regain and sustain her reputation in the Levant than is presented to her now.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> While I have been revising these proofs the march of events has furnished fresh corroboration for many of the observations made, but I have thought it unnecessary to note them in each case. The reader will see for himself how far the writer's anticipations have been fulfilled, or falsified, already.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE BULGARIAN QUARTER OF MONASTIR

A Greek outrage—A Bulgarian Archbishop—The spy—A Bulgarian play—The Sultan's difficulty—A Japanese agent—The truth about the Comitadjis—A new remedy—The white flag—A Turkish raid—American missionaries—A Greek prisoner

ON the third or fourth morning of my stay in Monastir my Greek dragoman brought me a report that during the night a Greek band had burnt the Bulgarian village of Bilianik, situated not far from the town.

I had not yet grasped the extent to which accusations against the Greek bands are fabricated by the terrorists against whom they operate, and it did not occur to me to doubt the report, particularly coming through such a channel.

I welcomed this occasion for approaching the Bulgars in a friendly spirit, and showing that I had no more sympathy with such acts on one side than on the other; and I decided, first, to pay a visit of condolence to the Bulgarian Archbishop of Monastir, and afterwards to go out to the scene of the outrage and report it fully.

My call appeared to take the Archbishop by surprise. The Turkish authorities, I fancy, are not the only people who take an interest in the comings and goings of suspicious strangers, and his Eminence may have been told that I was a Turcophile, or, worse, a Philhellene.

He was equally surprised to hear of the object of my visit. He had not heard of the outrage, he told me—an ignorance I was able to account for when I ascertained, later in the day, that it was a *Greek* village which had been attacked by a *Bulgarian* band.

After his Eminence had promised to send for information about the matter, he consented to give me his views on the general situation.

In his opinion the Turkish Government favoured the Greek and Servian bands. It punished one band, and let the next go free. Such an attitude would be natural, considering that only the Bulgarian bands are avowedly fighting to annex the country, and my own opinion is that the troops are rather more keen in chasing the Bulgarians.

When I asked the Archbishop what remedy he favoured for the existing state of things, he said that he wished all races and religions to live in harmony. But he rather discounted this expression by telling me, immediately afterwards: "There are no real Greeks in the country." That is, unhappily, the very point about which the pretended Greeks and the other Christians are at strife.

His Eminence did not think the harmony he desired was obtainable under Turkish rule. I asked why. "Because the Turks oppress the Bulgarian population."

I begged him to suggest how peace might be secured. He replied, "By appointing a Christian governor chosen from Norway or Switzerland." That meant, of course, a Protestant. A Roman Catholic governor would indeed unite Patriarchists and Exarchists, but he would unite them against himself.

The more I consider this suggestion, the less reasonable it seems to me. If the appointment of a Japanese governor were proposed I should see some propriety in it; but when the strife has been practically confined to the Christians, and the Moslems



have been keeping the peace in a truly exemplary manner under great provocation, it would be an extraordinary proceeding to punish them, and to encourage and reward the disturbers of the peace by appointing a governor who would be regarded by all as the friend and patron of the anarchists.

Nevertheless, the only important question is whether such an appointment would cause the bands to cease their activity. I put that question to the Archbishop. He spoke eloquently in reply, but did not answer the question. I again pressed him to say if, on the appointment of a Norwegian or Swiss as governor, the Bulgarian bands would cease converting Patriarchists into Exarchists by force. The Archbishop replied, of course, that it was wrong to use force, but he again abstained from answering me.

Finally I said :

"Supposing that I am able to obtain the word of honour of the Greeks and Servians to leave off, can I obtain the same pledge from the Bulgarians?"

On that rock our conversation split. The Archbishop would neither say yes nor no. I pressed the question again and again, without result. "The Church has nothing to do with the bands," I was told. "Nor has the Commercial Agent. Nor has the Government at Sofia. The Government is trying to prevent them from crossing the frontier."

Finding that I could get no further that way, I asked, as a final resource: "How can I get into touch with some one who has got something to do with the bands? How can I approach the Internal Organisation?"

The question was as useless as the other. The Bulgarian Archbishop could not even suggest a channel through which it might be possible to make overtures of peace to the Bulgarian bands engaged in making converts to his Church by force.

I do not complain of the Archbishop for having met me in the spirit of a politician rather than a priest.

He may have feared that if he had dealt with me differently I should have treated it as an admission on his part that the directing spirits of the propaganda were not entirely unknown to him. There are plenty of minds for which such technical points have value. A sensible man will no more doubt that there is some communication between the various wings of the Bulgarian party than that there is between those of the Greek.

Although the Bulgarian prelate refused me his confidence, he was friendly enough to invite me to an entertainment to be given that evening at the Bulgarian high school, in aid of their charities. I was grateful for the opportunity to see a better side of a people whose worst side had been shown to me hitherto.

Before the day was over I was destined to be reminded of my engagement in a rather interesting fashion. A young man called at my hotel, and, after telling me in English that he was a Greek, proceeded to explain that he had heard of my arrival in the town, and had come to offer me his services as a guide and interpreter.

By this time Mr. Kalopathakes had left me, having business which required his presence in Athens. I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude for his friendly companionship and valuable services. My dragoman could only speak to me in French, a language in which neither of us was quite at home, and therefore my present visitor's offer was not unwelcome.

By way of testimonial, he produced a letter from a Government office in the United States. This document, in very circumspect language, set forth that the bearer was a Greek merchant who was qualifying for American citizenship, and that he was entrusted with the charge of an insane Turkish subject whom the United States were sending back to his place of origin; and it invited the American Consuls and other

persons to give him such assistance as was proper in the circumstances. I thought the letter testified more strongly to the caution of the writer than to the high character of the bearer, and I invited him to give me a local reference as well.

"It is unnecessary," he assured me. "My family are well known in the town. You have only to ask any one you meet about me."

I repeated that I thought a note of introduction would be more satisfactory, and suggested the Greek Consul as a person in whose recommendation I should place confidence.

My visitor thought he could get a letter from the secretary to the Consulate. I said that the secretary would do equally well.

I then approached the question of terms. The Greek gentleman, with the generosity of his nation, offered to waive that point. I insisted, and, as he could not bring himself to name any sum, I asked him to leave me, and consider the matter before he called again.

In the doorway he turned back and asked me whether, in case he failed with the Greek Consulate, a note from the Bulgarian Agency would do equally well.

I replied gravely that I should be perfectly satisfied with the Bulgarian Agent's testimony, and added that I hoped to meet the Agent that night at the entertainment.

On that he left me, with marks of surprise. When I mentioned this offer in the evening to the Bulgarian Agent that gentleman contented himself with saying that he believed my visitor to be a respectable person, but he did not offer anything in the shape of a written testimonial, an omission of which I took advantage to refuse to see the man again. If in the course of my journey I encountered any real spy, I am inclined to think it was on this occasion. And I do not think he was acting in the interest of the Turkish Government.

Let me say here, once for all, that in my opinion a great deal of what has been said on the subject of espionage in Turkey is nonsense. It is perfectly natural and necessary that a Government which is in a state of siege, engaged in repressing an insurrection under the hypocritical supervision of the Powers which have stirred it up, should be nervous about foreign visitors, nearly the whole of whom come into the country as enemies. The last persons who can afford to throw stones are the Consuls and correspondents whose whole occupation it is to go behind the backs of the authorities and gather complaints from their discontented subjects. I was provoked into saying to one Consul, who harped on the topic of espionage, "It strikes me that you Consuls are the worst spies in Turkey."

The whole thing seemed to me so childish that while I was in Monastir I asked the vali to let me have a trustworthy messenger to take my letters to and from the post—a request which must have astonished him a good deal. He placed a police agent at my disposal, and the first letter I entrusted to his hands was one for the Bulgarian Agent. I confess to some curiosity as to its fate.

On arriving at the Bulgarian entertainment I was surprised and pleased to find a more distinguished visitor than Mr. Dobreff or myself, in the person of the Turkish Governor-General, seated, in the most friendly fashion, beside the Bulgarian Archbishop. The Archbishop was evidently far from suspecting the damaging effect such an association must have on his character in the eyes of "Europe." On the contrary, it was the vali who, as it were, apologised for his presence on the ground that he had formerly patronised a Greek function, and wished to show himself impartial. I have almost feared to relate that an address of welcome was presented to his Excellency, together with a bouquet,

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lest I should be accused of slandering the Bulgars of Monastir.

The first part of the performance was musical, the second was a most natural little comedy by a Bulgarian playwright. It was a satire on the rustic manners of the Folk themselves. A former deputy in the Sofia parliament had become a professor in Vienna, and one of his old constituents was paying him a visit. The fun turned on the contrast between the rough behaviour of the peasant visitor and the polished manners of his host, who tucked his table-napkin under his chin, while the poor peasant fumbled with his, and rolled it up in his hand. It would have been unkind to observe that the "European" practice at present inclines rather to the side of the peasant than the professor.

Finding myself seated next to the Bulgarian Agent, I took the opportunity to talk with him on the business which had brought me to Monastir. He met me with much more frankness than the Archbishop, and I was not long in recognising that he was a man altogether superior to such Bulgars as I had hitherto come across.

He did not pretend that the Government of Bulgaria took no interest in the Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia. He stated that his Government was dissatisfied with the Comitadji organisation, and that the latter was now demoralised. He endorsed the Archbishop's policy, however. What Macedonia wanted was a Christian governor, named and supported by the Powers. With some apparent inconsistency, he praised the Governor-General of the vilayet,<sup>1</sup> and said that he had no complaint to make of the Turkish authorities generally.

<sup>1</sup> I may remind the reader that my principle has been only to quote conversations in such a way as, in my opinion, cannot injure the speaker. Had the Bulgarian Agent spoken against the vali, I should have inserted his remarks in another place, and without naming my authority.

"The Sultan's intentions are excellent," he concluded, "but he cannot find good men."

The more I have pondered this observation the more true it has seemed to me. And its verihood is evident, to my mind, by its almost universal applicability. I have heard exactly the same criticism made on one of the monarchs who is now engaged in supplying the Sultan's deficiencies in Macedonia; I mean the Tzar of Russia. I have seen a practically identical remark about the King of England, and endorsed at the last General Election. With the exception of Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, I suppose there is no sovereign on this planet—no republic even—that does not suffer from precisely the same difficulty.

What is more strange, the justice of Mr. Dobreff's stricture is admitted by the Turks themselves. Many of them have said to me: "We know our Government has faults, but so have other Governments." If they had been less polite they would have said, "So has yours." And their opinion would not have been eccentric. It cannot be denied that some such opinion was entertained by many Englishmen of Mr. Balfour's Government. And men, apparently sincere, have hinted to me that they considered the present Government not superior to criticism.

"Who filled the butchers' shops with big blue flies?" The Government. And who hinted to the electors of Mid-Devon that the rise in the price of bread was not unconnected with the present Ministry's tenure of office? The Opposition. In Turkey these evils have been wrought by his Imperial Majesty the Sultan Abdul Hamid. And Europe has stood aghast.

I was coming away from the Bulgarian entertainment when I was waylaid in the hall by a sympathetic but excited lady who accepted a modest contribution towards her charities. I gave it in no spirit of treachery, and hardly know if I do wrong in repeating her confidences. They seemed to me intended for

publication. Europe, as represented by me, was not to be deceived by the hollow mockery of which I had been a witness upstairs. The Bulgarians of Monastir were not abject bondsmen, licking their tyrant's foot. They knew how to interpret the vali's presence in their midst. The comedy I had seen was no fair sample of Bulgaria's dramatic literature. There were other plays—plays calculated to stir the blood and make the oppressor tremble. But they had been prevented from staging one of them that night. The vali was there!

I did not tell her that Turkey was not the only country in which there is a censorship of plays. After all, no one really wants liberty, and the character of the fetters seems to be a matter of taste. The Oriental despot stations his policeman on your public platform; the Western Liberal stations his at your bedroom keyhole.

I liked what I had seen of Mr. Dobreff so much that I decided to call upon him, although I had had no intention of making that round of the Consulates which seems to be regarded as the chief duty of a foreign visitor in Turkey. I was the only foreigner present at the Bulgarian entertainment, the only one who seemed even to have heard of it, and perhaps it taught me as much as listening to the foreign Consuls.

The question I was anxious to discuss was the possibility of peace between the Christians. My journey had made me realise very clearly that any proposal for placing two-thirds of the population of the vilayet under the rule of the remaining third, Greek or Bulgarian, would be not only fantastic, but unjust.

Mr. Dobreff met me with the same openness that he had shown overnight. He said:

"I will not pretend to you that we do not want any more territory. We are a young nation, and we are ambitious, and of course we seek expansion."

While we were talking, it all at once struck me that I was listening to a Japanese. There is something about the face of the Bulgarian Agent which supports the view that the Bulgarians are a partly Mongolian race. The deeds of the Comitadjis smack of the Cossack, but the intelligence which directs them is more worthy of Tokio.

Mr. Dobreff confessed that he saw no chance of a reconciliation between the warring factions. If the Bulgarian bands slackened their activity, the Greeks would take fresh heart. If the Greeks and Servians withdrew, the Bulgars would deem their chance had come. It was "a vicious circle"—the exact words used to me by our Ambassador in Constantinople.

I went rather further than I had any right to go, perhaps. I said, "I believe I could persuade the Greeks to call off their bands if I were personally satisfied that the Bulgars would follow suit."

The Bulgarian Agent shook his head.

"The peasants would not understand you if you were to go to them with any such proposal. They would ask what object you had in view."

There could be no better light on the difficulties that beset the question. A governor from Norway! A governor from Paradise could not succeed in gaining simultaneously the confidence of the Greeks and the Bulgars. Six weeks before my arrival, as I learned privately after this conversation, a peace overture had been made from the Bulgarian side, and rejected as a trap by the Greeks!

Mr. Dobreff's view of the Comitadjis was rather undecided. The peasants needed them to protect them from "the official bands"—in other words, the Turkish troops. At the same time the peasants suffered severely from the exactions of the unofficial bands.

"The Bulgarian villages are poor, and they wish to be rid of the bands."

It was startling testimony, as it stood. In my



opinion, it was true testimony. But my Greek friends would not accept the multiplication table as true if it came from Bulgarian lips. They told me that this was Sofia's latest pose, to deceive the Powers. Sofia wished to be able to say, "I wash my hands of this movement. I have nothing to do with it. I disapprove of it. I consider the Comitadjis a curse to the country. You cannot hold me responsible for men whom my own consular agents have been denouncing for a year past."

All that is very well. Sofia may have her ends in view, but yet it may serve those ends for Sofia to say the thing which is. Into Mr. Dobreff's motives I am not called upon to pry. In my opinion—I repeat it—his words accurately described the situation. The average Macedonian, Exarchist as well as Patriarchist, is heartily sick of his liberators, native or foreign. It would be very strange if he were not.

It does not follow that Sofia is sick of them, though there are signs even of that. The assassination of Sarafoff in his own house in Sofia occurred while I was in Rumelia, and was very generally attributed to the instigation of the Bulgarian Government.

I am able to confirm Mr. Dobreff's testimony on this head by a citation from a report addressed by the Bulgarian Archbishop of Uskub, in the neighbouring vilayet, to the Exarchate, and reproduced in *The Hellenic Herald* for August 1907.

"The members of the Bulgarian Committees have exacted forced contributions from the Bulgars, and have committed various excesses and acts of injustice, thereby causing incalculable loss. This behaviour of the Committees has spread terror among our people. And the consequence is that a large number of Bulgarian villages, and many notables, have sought, and continue to seek, relief from the forced contributions and excesses, and acts of terrorism, by fleeing to the Œcumenical Patriarchate."

In plainer language, they have sought for and

obtained the protection of the Greek Antartes. I may be justified in adding the statement, made to me personally by a leader of those Antartes, "Captain Athales Bouas," that the Comitadjis in some places have actually required the Bulgarian villages to send women to their camps.

Mr. Dobreff's remedy, it may be thought, showed the cloven foot. He considered that the peasants themselves would put down the Comitadjis, if they were armed. It would be sufficient to serve out a dozen or twenty rifles to trustworthy men in each village. This remedy had been tried formerly for non-political brigandage, and it had proved effective. The foreign gendarmery officers had recommended it for the present case.

The obvious question suggested itself whether the rifles would be used against the unofficial bands or the official bands.

The Turkish authorities, Mr. Dobreff admitted, entertained some doubt on this head. He suggested, however, that they might try the experiment of arming a single caza, and seeing the result.

I asked which caza. Mr. Dobreff proposed the caza of Kirtchevo, on the border of Servia and Albania, because in that region there were both political and non-political bands.

The Bulgarian Agent's proposal seemed to me a reasonable one, although my Greek friends detected some dark design or other in his choice of a caza. But the particular caza might be a matter of arrangement. The difficulty would probably lie in obtaining the consent of the Turkish authorities to the arming of Christians in the present state of the country. And even if they were willing, there are not many villages in Macedonia just now in which it would be possible to find twenty men worthy of trust by Turks, Greeks, Bulgars, and Serbs alike.

Mr. Dobreff's frankness did not end there. Leaning

towards me to emphasise his words, he said in conclusion :

"The root of all the evil is the concentration of power in the hands of the Sultan. Arming the people will be a subtraction from that power. And every subtraction is a gain." Since those words were spoken the power has passed out of the hands of the Sultan into those of a party which has offered good government as the price of loyalty. But the worser elements of the Comitadji party are still active; Sandanski is still terrorising a considerable district around Serres, and it may be worth while for the new Government to consider Mr. Dobreff's suggestion.

I did not say so to Mr. Dobreff, because I had come to learn and not to teach; but I was beginning to feel that, if I were unfortunate enough to find myself governor of Monastir, my first proceeding would be to set up in the most conspicuous place in the town the biggest and blackest gallows that money could buy, and let it be known that it was not there for ornament.

The reader will remark one thing about both these conversations with the heads of the Bulgarian party, and that is their refusal to encourage any effort on my part towards peace-making. At the time I was tempted to place an uncharitable construction on their attitude, but I have since seen reason to believe that they were actuated by honourable motives. In short, I think it probable that they feared to let me approach the Comitadjis lest I should be seized and held to ransom.

For the Folk do not respect the white flag. Of this there is abundant evidence, and I need only cite the case of Tello Agra, as it was reported in the *Figaro* of July 11, 1907.

Tello Agra was a young Greek of 26, who had formed the desire, which, I believe, is common to all Greeks, of making peace with the Bulgars. With this

object he came into Macedonia as a leader of Antartes, and in a short time he succeeded in establishing a truce in his own district. He then made overtures to a Bulgarian chief named Zlatan, who enjoyed authority in the neighbourhood of Niausta.

Zlatan received his overtures favourably, and invited Agra to come and meet him with a view to a friendly discussion. The young Greek accepted the invitation, and went, with only one follower, to the place of rendezvous. He was welcomed into the Bulgarian camp, and set down to a feast. The custom of dining beforehand with the man they intend to slay is a peculiarity of the Folk, which distinguishes them very strongly from the Arabs. In this case, it has been suggested to me, the object was to make sure that Tello Agra had come alone and unsupported.

As soon as the meal was over Zlatan gave the signal. The two Greeks were seized and bound, and carried off to the mountains. On the next day some passing shepherds found their two corpses hanging from trees, hacked to ribbons. That of the would-be peacemaker bore a hundred wounds.

In judging of incidents like these it must be borne in mind steadily that these tigers do not themselves pretend to be fighting for freedom. That is only the defence set up for them by their agents in the foreign Press. Here, on the spot, they do not conceal that their object is the subjection of the Christian population to the Bulgarian yoke, or its extermination.

A day or two afterwards found me at the Bulgarian high school. It is well built, and seemed too large for the needs of the population, many of the classrooms being half empty. The education here appeared fully up to the Greek standard. In addition to Turkish and Greek, the elder pupils take Latin. I thought this last infliction might have been spared them, but it was explained to me that Latin was necessary for those who were taking up law or medicine.

This question of languages is an appalling one all over Rumelia. I have been in schools where the unfortunate pupils were expected to know Turkish, Greek, French, English, German, and Latin, in addition to their native dialect of Slave, Armenian, or Spanish. A little Hebrew might be thrown in, in the case of Jews, and a little Italian, with a few words of Arab, would be picked up later on. Naturally, they cannot master any one speech, and their minds, if they ever try to think, must resemble a kaleidoscope. I should be tempted to point out Rumelia as a hopeful field for the Esperantists, but for the fear of adding an Esperanto nationality to those already battling for recognition.

The Bulgarian schoolmaster apologised for a very ragged map of Europe which hung in one class-room. A new one had been ordered, but it showed Bulgaria as one country, instead of marking Eastern Rumelia by another colour, and the Turkish authorities had intercepted it.

It was an incident in that veiled civil war between Moslem and Christian which goes on alongside of the Folk War between the Christians themselves.

A more startling one was to follow. I had looked in at some adjoining premises where a number of orphans, poor little victims of the Folk War, were being fed; and I was coming away again, when I felt my arm clutched frantically, and turned to see my charitable lady friend of the entertainment.

With deep emotion she told me that a typical Turkish atrocity was at that very moment being perpetrated in the town of Monastir, almost round the corner. The Turkish soldiery had invaded the peaceful Bulgarian quarter, they were searching from house to house, they had placed a cordon across the streets, and many of the children were unable or afraid to come for their daily meal.

My amiable, but perhaps not quite impartial, acquaintance urged me to "interest myself" in these proceed-

ings. I was a European; that is to say, a person whose obvious duty it was to hasten to the rescue and call on the Turkish authorities, in the name of the Powers, to desist. I took the agitated philanthropist at her word, so far as to ask her the reason for this raid upon the Bulgarian quarter. She told me that the Turks believed some Comitadjis were concealed there, and they had already arrested one.

I was sorry that I could not see my way to call off the agents of the law. The man taken, as I learned afterwards, had papers on him, proving him to be a well-known chief, who had just arrived from Sofia to organise fresh atrocities. It was regrettable that the children in the quarter should have received a fright by his arrest; but it would have seemed to me more regrettable that other children should have been orphaned or slain by his escape. The behaviour of the Turkish soldier may be rough beside that of the London policeman, but the shelterers and abettors of Zlatan and Apostol are hardly entitled to kid-glove treatment.

It was a typical Turkish atrocity, and a typical Bulgarian appeal. If my reception of it were more typical of the friendly European, there would be some hope of Macedonian bloodshed being stayed.

An account of the Bulgarian quarter would not be complete without some reference to their influential allies, the American missionaries, or what are called such.

The American missionaries in this part of the world are a class apart. Some of them are of American extraction, but they have been born and brought up in the country, and are to all intents and purposes as thoroughly Bulgared as Bulgars born and brought up in the United States would be Americanised. Others are native Bulgars who have been converted to some American form of Christianity, and are consequently entitled, according to local ideas, to rank as

Americans. The missions in Monastir and Salonika have branched off from the original mission to Bulgaria, and their work is practically confined to the Bulgarian population. They seem to share the feelings and ambitions of Sofia to the fullest extent, and their native colporteurs are reckoned by the Greeks as being among the most useful intelligence-agents of the Comitadjis, owing to the immunity conferred on them by the protection of the United States.

So far as I am aware, the missionaries themselves do not disclaim responsibility for their share in the Bulgarian propaganda. The conductors of the Robert College, an institution of theirs at Constantinople, have publicly boasted that the Principality of Bulgaria is their creation; meaning, it should seem, that their college educated most of its leading politicians. The capture of one American missionary, a woman, by a Bulgarian band for the sake of a heavy ransom has not diminished their sympathy with the cause; indeed the forgiving spirit shown by the lady herself was so remarkable as to give rise to a suspicion—I am confident a wholly unjust one—that she had been a consenting party to the transaction.

I have not made these observations with any desire to injure the missionaries, who are no doubt sincere and well-meaning persons. But it is natural that very great reliance should be placed, in England as well as in America, on the opinions as well as the direct statements of residents in Rumelia who are supposed to be Anglo-Saxons, free from local prejudice; and on that account I have felt entitled and bound to point out that the agents of the American Mission are scarcely more impartial than the native Bulgars or Greeks.

In Monastir they have an orphanage, which was the first institution I went to see on my arrival in the town. There is a friendly intercourse between all the few Protestants in the Levant, and my companion, Mr. Kalopathakes, therefore found himself among friends.

I was disappointed by the character of the building, which impressed me as rather miserable. The room in which the lady superintendent received us was bare and dingy, and there was a general air of untidiness, and almost of squalor, about the place, which this lady apologised for by saying that there had been illness among the children.

The number of orphans was about thirty, of whom two were pointed out to me, by my request, as Greeks. They all appeared to be cheerful and well clad, and it was evident that the superintendent was doing her best for them with inadequate means. But, on the whole, this institution was the least pleasing that I visited in the country. It compared unfavourably with the Rumanian and Servian ones, to say nothing of the Greek and Turkish, and was quite unworthy of the great country which it represented.

The lady superintendent, in the course of conversation, informed me that the Bulgars of Monastir had ceased to take advantage of the Greek hospital in the town, because one of them had been murdered, while an inmate, by a Greek doctor. On my expressing some surprise at this hideous charge, she added confidently :

"There is no doubt about it. The Greek doctor confessed what he had done. He said that he had received an order to poison the man, and he had poisoned him."

"Did the Greek doctor say that to you?" I asked.

"No, not to me ; but he said it to some one in the town."

I returned, without trying to conceal the view I took of that answer, "Since I came into this country I have made it a rule not to believe anything that is not told to me, myself."

The lady missionary looked rather embarrassed. Probably it was the first time in her life that she had ever been called upon to substantiate a statement, or had had it suggested to her that it was wrong to



make atrocious accusations to damage political adversaries without having an atom of proof to support them. If there were a word of truth in that story the Greek hospital of Monastir ought to be reduced to ashes. If there be no word of truth in it, what must we think of the class that lightly repeats it to every passing traveller, and perhaps makes use of it on religious platforms, at a distance of four thousand miles from contradiction?

The Bulgars have no hospital of their own in Monastir, and, according to a writer who would seem to have been in close association with the American missionaries, the Turkish hospital is regarded by them as a mere lethal chamber.<sup>1</sup> Under these circumstances it seemed worth ascertaining how they fared.

I visited the Greek hospital, and found it half empty. It had been built originally to meet the wants of all the Christians, but since the Folk War broke out the Bulgars are no longer admitted as in-patients. According to the dispenser in charge, who showed me over, the Bulgars object equally to coming, and the Greeks to receiving them. But, he added, they continue to come to the dispensary, where they receive advice and medicine free of charge. It should not be more difficult to poison them as out-patients than as in-patients. (It is worth adding that some Moslems resort to the Greek hospital as paying patients.)

The Bulgars now go, in the latter capacity, to the Turkish hospital. The head-master of the Bulgarian school confirmed this statement by saying that the Bulgars resorted to the Turkish hospital quite freely, and were well treated there. The doctors are all Turks, the dispenser is a Greek—one trusts, not a poisoner.

<sup>1</sup> "There are, it is true, two Turkish hospitals, one civil and one military, but the average peasant would rather die than trust himself within them."—*Macedonia*, by H. N. Brailsford, p. 199.

I cannot hope that this exposure of one of the calumnies so freely circulated in the interests of the Folk is likely to check the propagation of others equally baseless ; but, at least, it may cause them to be received with more distrust in future by the Western public.

## CHAPTER XIII

### "ALL PEOPLES, NATIONS, AND LANGUAGES"

An alarmist rumour—The story of Bilianik—The Italian gendarmery officer—An Albanian witness—A Christian Bishop—The Servian view—A Greek barrister on Turkish justice—A Turkish prison—Hellenism triumphant—The three tales of Rokotina—In a Moslem village.

ONE evening, while I was in Monastir, my dragoman came to me with exciting news.

"There is something going to happen in the town to-night. The Bulgarians are going to make an attack on the Greek quarter. The authorities have posted a guard in front of all the Consulates except the Bulgarian!"

The dragoman had learned by this time the meaning of the English legal phrase, "the best evidence," for he added, of his own accord:

"If you will come with me I will take you round to all the Consulates, and show you the sentry opposite each."

I accepted the offer, saying that I had business at the Greek Consulate, and we would go there first.

When we arrived at the Greek Consulate there was no sentry to be seen! The dragoman acquiesced meekly when I told him that I did not think it necessary to pursue the quest further. If the Bulgarians spared the Greek Consulate they were not likely to attack the Russian.

Such are the little distractions that beguile the tedium of life in an Eastern town. It does not do

to take them too seriously, and yet it does not do to take them too lightly. There was a certain night in Cairo, not so very long ago, when the Egyptian troops were all deprived of their arms under the pretext of musketry inspection, and every British soldier had ball cartridge served out to him, and was kept under arms till dawn.

The Greek Consul at Monastir, Mr. Dimaras, was not less anxious than my Greek friends elsewhere that I should be told the exact truth, and I was indebted to his kind offices for clearing up more than one wild report.

By way of example, I will quote the case of Bilianik, which proved rather more substantial than some of the others. Bilianik was the village on whose reported destruction, by a Greek band, I had gone to condole with the Bulgarian Archbishop.

As it turned out, this was the only report of a Greek outrage on Bulgarians which reached me while I was in the country. I showed myself ready to receive information of the kind, provided I were allowed to check it. I came into contact with Bulgarian Agents, a Bulgarian Bishop, Bulgarian schoolmasters, and Bulgarian missionaries, as well as with Turkish authorities who had no sympathy with the Greek bands. But the only outrage reported to me on the spot turned out to be a Bulgarian one, and on the occasions when I found myself on the actual track of the Greek partisans they appeared to be acting strictly on the defensive. I am far from questioning that their bands have been guilty of outrages, and I am still farther from excusing them. But I think the idea of their doings instilled into the mind of Europe must be grossly exaggerated, and that it is due at least as much to the activities of Bulgarian correspondents as to those of the Greek bands themselves.

The Bilianik outrage, like so many others, dwindled

more and more as I approached it. Originally the whole village had been consumed. Later accounts reduced the tale of damage first to twenty houses, and then to five. In the end it turned out that one house had been partly, and a few barns totally, destroyed.

As luck would have it, I happened to be round at the Greek Consulate when a group of the villagers arrived to tell their story. The chief sufferer was called in, and his statement was interpreted to me in English by the secretary of the Consulate.

"My name is Stoitze George. I am a labourer working on the farm of Omar Bey, who is president of the municipality of Monastir.

"The produce of the farm is divided between the bey and myself. The chief crops are cereals. The horses and ploughs belong to me. The bey provides the seed.

"At the end of the harvest the bey sends a man, and we divide the produce together. I am far too honest to hide any before the bey's man arrives.

"Last night, at ten o'clock, the village was attacked. I heard shots, but saw nothing, as I was afraid to go out. We had received no threat or warning beforehand. The band stayed one and a half hours.

"They set fire to my house and my stable and barn, and five cows and twenty sheep were burned. I saved part of the house. All the animals' food was burned. Other people's barns were burned.

"In the village we speak the language I am speaking now—Bulgarski. We belong to the Greek Church, which is ours by tradition. All the villagers are the same.

"Bands have often come to us to make us change. Our priest is Greek, and we have kept the faith. The bands said to us, 'Become Bulgarians, and you will be free.' We answered, 'We cannot. We want our freedom in our own religion.'

"We have been with our story to Omar Bey, to the Bishop and to the Consul, but not to any Turkish authority." There was an outburst of genuine indignation at this last question. "Why should we go to the authorities?—we come to our parents."

The spirit of Stoitze George is one which the Young Turks can hardly hope to change in a day.

And now, what a light does that simple statement throw on the hypocritical pretences by which it has been sought to disguise the true object of the Folk War! "Macedonia for the Macedonians," says the Bulgarian Agent. "Let all races and religions live together in harmony," says the Bulgarian Archbishop. "*Become Bulgars*, and you will be free," say the Comitadjis. And the peasants who wish to be free in their own religion are invaded, their houses and barns are fired, and their wretched sheep and cattle are burned alive.

Although I met Stoitze George in the Greek Consulate, and although he spoke of the Greek Consul as his parent, I do not reckon him a Greek. Neither, of course, is he a Bulgar. He is a Macedonian Christian, and nothing more at present. The strongest sentiment he knows is a religious one; it is fanatical adherence to the Patriarchate; but his children will grow up Greeks. The Comitadjis have finished the work that the Greek schools and churches had begun. They have taught these Macedonian peasants that liberty, as it is understood at Sofia, is worse than slavery as it is understood at Stamboul.

The only European on whom I called in Monastir, beside the British Consul, was Colonel Albera, the chief of the Italian gendarmery officers, who has his headquarters here. Our interview confirmed the high opinion I had heard expressed of this officer in many quarters.

I found him repining at his long exile from Italy. He complained that life in Monastir was anything but cheerful, and contrasted his lot, in having been kept

at his post four years, with that of the English officers, who were changed every year or two.

His depression was deepened by the feeling that he was accomplishing no solid good. He despaired of finding any remedy for what he termed the "Macedonian salad"; and he believed the reformed gendarmery would collapse to-morrow if the foreign officers were withdrawn.

At the same time he doubted very much if the people of the country would like European rule. The strict laws, the heavy taxes, and the conscription, he thought, might cause them to regret their present condition. A similar doubt has assailed the mind of M. Victor Bérard, and was shared by our Consul-General at Salonika.

"A Christian is very well off here if he does not meddle with politics," was the judgment of Colonel Albera.

The Italian officer considered that there was no difference between the Greeks and Bulgarians in the enormity of their outrages; but his account of the character of the bands agreed with that of the boy I had questioned at Voden. The Bulgarian bands were formed locally; a small nucleus under a voivode arrived in a district, and called out the Bulgarian peasants like a militia. The Greek bands resembled military detachments, more of them were strangers to the country, and they had more officers. They were paid from Athens, and they paid their way wherever they went, whereas the Bulgarian bands lived on the country.

Colonel Albera considered that the Turkish army was ill-trained and ill-equipped, whereas the Bulgarian army was first-rate, especially in its infantry, which he characterised as a "model infantry." But he naturally declined to express an opinion as to its chances in an encounter with the Turks.

The only witness whose evidence I was obliged to

take *in camera* was one who professed himself impartial as between Greeks and Bulgars—he was himself a Protestant Albanian—but whose reason for not letting me mention his name was fear of the Bulgars. He told me that he had contributed, under threats, to the Comitadji funds. Many Greeks, and even some Turks, had done the same when the movement first started. But when the Greeks found that the liberators had made 125 villages turn from the Patriarch to the Exarch, they changed their minds. Up till then they had made no move against the Bulgars.

Now, he stated, the wretched villagers were going to and fro as each band arrived. I heard from another source of one village which had been compelled to change its profession six times.

My Albanian witness, I found, was in strong sympathy with the attempt to revive or create an Albanian literature. Indeed I am inclined to think that movement is very largely a missionary one. It is disapproved by the Government, which has learnt by experience that the school-book is quickly followed by the cartridge, if not by the bomb.

It is difficult to say how far the Albanians have been affected by the attempts made to detach them from the cause of Islam, as represented by the Sultan. The Moslem Albanians are rather recent converts, and Albania is the one country in the Balkan region in which the feeling of nationality seems to be independent of religion. Thus I have heard of an Albanian Moslem going to stay with a Christian at Athens, and I am told that an Albanian Christian would be received as a friend by his Moslem countrymen in Constantinople. There seems to be a certain likeness between this people and the Swiss, who have so successfully overcome the dividing influence of creed. The Albanians further resemble the mediæval Swiss in being mercenary soldiers, but, also like the Swiss, they are faithful to their paymaster as long as the money lasts.



Austria and Italy are both making efforts to attach this wild people to their interest. But they have no relish for European law and order; they refused to accept the extension to their country of the Macedonian reforms. Italy might find another Abyssinia in Albania. On the whole they are never likely to find themselves better suited with a master than they are at present, and an independence that deprived them of the privilege of raiding the Servian plain would hardly suit them much better.

In the event of a withdrawal of the Turkish flag across the Vardar, or across the Bosphorus, the Greeks believe that Albania would be their natural ally. They do not aspire to govern the country, but to live on good terms with it, and to enjoy its military support against the encroaching Slave.

I have already touched on the character of the Greek element in the town of Monastir. In the absence of the Archbishop, who is in Constantinople, serving on the Holy Synod, the diocese is being administered by one of the few Greek prelates who retain the modest style of Bishop.

The Bishop of Petra is a native of Koniah, or Iconium, in the heart of Asia Minor, where the Greeks are surrounded by a pure Turkish population. He told me the interesting fact that his sisters could speak no language but Turkish—which he put forward as an argument against treating language as a test of nationality. It seemed a rather strong argument.

Equally foreible was his observation on the Exarchist Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia :

"The best proof that the people do not want to be Bulgars is that they have had to convert them by force."

It is a difficult remark to answer. The Bulgarian apologist can only excuse the atrocities of his clients by arguments which would be rejected with horror by the ordinary anarchist. According to him, if in

any country a body of men, however contemptible in point of numbers, band themselves together to seize the government, they are thereby justified, not merely in employing assassination against the agents and supporters of the government in existence; they are justified in usurping authority over the ordinary peaceable inhabitants; they may rob and plunder them, they may murder those who complain, or torture those who hang back.<sup>1</sup>

If the anarchists of Europe should ever be tempted to act upon these principles, the world will become one great carnival of horror. And if anything could add to their wickedness it would be their extension to what is, in substance, a war of annexation, waged, not against the Turkish Government, but against the Hellenist people. In order to understand the full bearing of this frightful reasoning, we must imagine Ireland an independent republic, and emissaries from Dublin landing in Liverpool to conquer that city. They will be received and sheltered in the Irish quarter; they will shirk encounters with the English police; but they will set about bringing over the Welsh citizens to their side by a campaign of savage terror.

After I had left Monastir, I wrote to the Bishop to thank him for his kind attentions, which included the marvellous gift of a Christmas pudding! The Greek clergy have been so fiercely assailed for their political activities that I shall be excused for printing the reply I received, which breathes the true spirit of a Christian pastor.

“MONASTIR,

“January 6, 1908.

“DEAR MR. UPWARD,

“I have received your letter, and I hasten to thank you for all the good you are trying to do on

<sup>1</sup> “A revolutionary organisation has as much right as a recognised Government to punish traitors, and to levy taxes by force.”—*Macedonia*, by H. N. Brailsford, p. 129. But the whole chapter must be read in order to see the lengths to which Bulgarian sympathisers are prepared to go.

behalf of the Christians of this unhappy land. May the Almighty assist your labours, and grant the prayers which I frame for the *peace*<sup>1</sup> of this country. I do not know how to thank you enough for having been good enough to undertake, for humane ends, a journey so trying.

"I beg you to excuse me for not having found you at home on the morning of your leaving, when I came to the hotel to accompany you to the station. Hoping to see you again soon, I beg you to accept the assurance of my sincere esteem.

"The Bishop of Petra,  
"EMILIAN."

The Greeks of Monastir had no difficulty in citing cases in which the authorities seemed to have leant rather to the Bulgarian side than theirs. Five of the most active members of each community had been deported a short time before; the Bulgars had been permitted to return, but the Greeks were still in exile.

The Turkish Government could hardly favour the Bulgarian party as a deliberate policy without being insane, and I am tempted to attribute some of these acts of clemency to the superiority of the Bulgars in the arts of influence. One Turkish official was pointed out to me as having solicited from the Greeks a modest recognition of his good-will towards them, and having been refused.

The Rumanians are said to show more gratitude, and they certainly seem to be on excellent terms with the local authorities in most places, as long as they confine themselves to the peaceful work of education.

Their principal institution in Monastir has been in existence since 1880. It claims 147 pupils, of whom 130 are boarders, and has a staff of 18 masters. There are also three Rumanian primary schools, and one for girls. The boarders, I was told, were nominated by the different Vlach communities. I went over the

<sup>1</sup> This word, "*pacification*," is underlined in the French original.

principal school, which struck me as prosperous and well conducted.

On a subsequent occasion I inspected the similar Servian institution. I had made an appointment beforehand, and the Servian Consul was present. The pupils here numbered about sixty, and they seemed to be entirely boarders—in short, it was a sort of Bluecoat School. Nothing could be better for the fortunate young Macedonians who are admitted to it, and nothing more illusory, I fear, for the Government which keeps it up. As in the Rumanian schools, I found a plethora of teachers—in fact, two of these gentlemen were passing their time agreeably in a parlour of their own, while their colleagues were on duty. But I could not criticise, when I found the boys looking so happy and well cared for. They wore uniforms as smart as those of the Government school, and their singing was the best I heard in the whole country.

From the Servian Consul I received an important piece of information. The whole population of Macedonia, he told me, was Servian. I fancy he had come to the school to meet me on purpose to communicate this secret, which has been so successfully kept up to the present. I know not whether I am the first traveller whom the Servian Government has taken into its confidence, or merely the first to betray it.

After all, the Servian claim is quite as reasonable as the Bulgarian; the only difference is that it comes too late. A course of "Brancoff" leaves the investigator cold in the face of statements like that of the Servian representative.

In the north-west of the country—that is to say, towards the frontier of the Servian kingdom—the Christian population undoubtedly prefers that nationality. It has resisted the Bulgarian bands, and Servian bands have entered the field in defence, exactly as in the case of the Greeks. Their common interest in resisting the aggressive Principality has drawn the Greeks and

Serbs together. The city of Athens has just named a street after a Servian hero, and the compliment is likely to be returned in Belgrade. It is fair to add that Servia has always shown herself ready to come into a scheme for peace and union between the Balkan States. But she has been no more successful than Greece in softening the temper of Bulgaria.

One of the most interesting days I spent while at Monastir was occupied in visiting the two large villages of Tirnovo and Megarevo, which lie only a few miles out along the road to Ochrida. Their united population is about five thousand, and they are peopled almost exclusively by the *Lame Welsh*.

My guide on this occasion was Mr. Tsiganes, a Greek barrister practising in the courts of Monastir. I was interested to learn from him that he had both Turkish and Bulgarian clients. He told me the story of one case in which a wealthy Turk had taken him completely into his confidence. In his general experience, the Turkish tribunals are impartial as between Moslem and Christian in civil cases. He would not say that they were wholly incorruptible, but I gathered that what corruption existed was rather in Constantinople than in the local Courts. In criminal cases he considered that there was some leniency shown to Moslems for political reasons. The Government did not feel itself strong enough to carry out a death-sentence against a Turk in a case arising out of the Folk War, and therefore the Courts acquitted in order to spare the executive an awkward dilemma.

The case he cited in illustration was that of two Turks, who had been hired by a Greek to throw a bomb into a Bulgarian shop. There was evidence against the Turks, but none against the Greek, and the Court had ended by acquitting all three. I explained that in England one of the Turks would have been offered a pardon on condition of giving evidence against the Greek. This idea was quite new to Mr. Tsiganes, and evidently would be so to the

Turkish Courts as well. But the case shows what must, I think, be generally admitted, that the Turkish tribunals are not sufficiently severe. I do not think there can be many countries in which that Greek would have been allowed to get off. And even when the Courts condemn, the Government pardons. Five thousand Bulgarian offenders have been released in five years. It is to be feared that in too many of these cases mercy towards the criminal is cruelty towards his victim. But we must always be upon our guard against the injustice of applying our own strait-laced, perhaps Pharisaical, ideas to a country where climate, history, and race have all tended to produce a different morality.

While in Monastir I visited the prison. I was moved to do so because of the assertions made to me that it was a place Europeans were not permitted to enter. Even the Italian officers, I was told, were jealously kept outside; and, of course, the suggestion was that it was a den reeking with horrors comparable with those of Spain and Naples.

I purposely made the visit a surprise one, and the governor, or head warder, was away. The prison proved to be a ramshackle affair, partly built of wood, standing in an open yard divided off by a wooden paling. In the yard a stork meditated placidly, and various persons, whom I supposed to be first-class misdemeanants, followed its example. Upstairs I was taken into two or three rooms, of exactly the same character as those in an ordinary Rumelian dwelling-house. The average number of captives in each room was six, and they were lying comfortably on beds stretched on the floor. In one room I came upon a couple of Bulgarian priests, who had been seized with rifles in their hands. There can be few European criminals, I should say, who would not greatly prefer being tried by a Turkish Court, and confined in a Turkish gaol, to running the gauntlet of European justice.

The prison I saw had just before been condemned, and a new one was being built close beside it, by order of Hilmi Pasha. It promises to be a much less pleasant place of retreat.

My reception at Tirnovo and Megarevo, which practically form one town, partook of the character of a public triumph. The day chosen was a Sunday, and the population lined the streets as we drove through. But for the absence of cheering, I might have imagined myself a parliamentary candidate once again.

The first place I was taken to see was the church of the Panaghia, that is to say the Virgin, in Tirnovo, a fine specimen of the Byzantine style. On the altar I found a number of votive offerings in the shape of silver models of various parts of the human frame. The Panaghia of Tirnovo is in high repute as a healer, and her terms compare very favourably indeed with those of the Christian Scientists. In return for one of these silver models, she will cure the afflicted member ; and, as the offering is not made until the cure has been effected, the system is one of payment by results. Nothing could be more honest than that. Learning that these offerings were on sale for the benefit of the church, I bought a silver ear, an eye, a hand, and a leg, so as to be well provided for a meeting with the Bulgarians. I bought them "good cheap," as they say at Canterbury, a Turkish medjidieh for the four.

I was taken to the school, where every class-room presented that packed appearance which the traveller soon learns to associate with the Hellenic institutions. Here I applied a test of nationality, by directing my dragoman to ask one or two pupils in each class, "Are you a Vlach or a Bulgar?" In every case the answer was given instantly—"Hellene!" And it was given with unmistakable enthusiasm.

The chart of the schools in Macedonia, prepared a few years back by the Greek Government, shows



SCHOLARS OF THE GREEK SCHOOLS OF MEGAREVO AND TIRNOVO—KOUTZO-VLACHS.

p. 274.]





a Rumanian school in Megarevo-Tirnovu. I asked to be taken to it. I was informed that it had just been closed for lack of scholars, and not even a master was left. I was not surprised.

We were invited to lunch with one of the principal residents, who carries on business in Monastir during the week, but comes out here for the Sunday. Very soon they hope to have an electric tramway into Monastir, and go to and fro every day. The chief delicacy provided was a trout from the Lake of Ochrida, whose fish are justly famed. The entire household arrangements were quite in the European style, and a venerable dame presided at the table.

Advantage was taken of her presence to refute a shameful slander in circulation at the expense of the Megarevites. It appears that their enemies assert that the old people cannot speak Greek. The old lady beside me was called as a witness to the contrary, and she certainly appeared to be a mistress of the popular language. In spite of this strong evidence, I suspect the accusation is not wholly baseless. What the old lady really proved beyond all doubt or cavil was that Greek will be the language of her grandchildren. The Vlachs of Megarevo are like the Vlachs of Verria: they are determined to give no excuse to the political pedant for robbing them of their nationality, and they are bringing their tongues into tune with their hearts.

This wonderful and widespread movement on the part of the Lame Welsh to abandon a dialect which they have used for ages, under the influence of patriotic feeling, is far more remarkable than any of those revivals of forgotten languages which have been carried out or attempted in countries like Bohemia and Ireland. When it is considered that they are making this sacrifice in the face of disapproval on the part of the Government, of bribery on the part of the Rumanians, and terrorism on the part of the Bulgars, in order to cast in their

lot with a small and weak State, labouring under defeat and obloquy, it becomes impressive indeed. There must be some magic still in the name of Hellas to call forth devotion such as this.

It is important to remark, moreover, that the places which exhibited this phenomenon were always those in which security prevailed. Megarevo and Tirnovo are too large, and too near to Monastir, to have anything to fear from the bands, whether Greek or Bulgarian. Indeed they have become a sort of shelter for refugees from elsewhere.

While I was there I remarked some boys in an exceedingly picturesque costume—the ordinary inhabitants wear European dress—and I inquired who they were. A Megarevite answered that they were natives of a small village called Rokotina, partly inhabited by Moslems, who had burnt their own houses, and left their village, because of the ill-usage they suffered from their Moslem neighbours.

I did not doubt the truth of this story; in fact, it struck me that the Rokotinites had acted in an extremely sensible manner. If all these populations would emigrate in the same way, the Balkans would soon be at peace. But I was obliged to stipulate for first-hand information, and, as my Megarevite friend objected to my questioning the boys there and then, on account of the presence of gendarmes, I arranged that some of the refugee villagers should come to me in Monastir the next day.

In the afternoon I was present at a regular function in the Megarevo schools. A choir of one hundred girls sang Greek songs, and a number of children gave recitations and dialogues quite in the style of an English school.

Last of all, I paid my respects to Saint Demetrius, the patron of the church of Megarevo. This saint is inferior to the Panaghia as a medical practitioner, but he is in high repute as a meteorologist. The weather was threatening for our drive back, and I prudently

purchased two candles, which I lit at his shrine in order to induce him to hold off the rain. This act gave intense satisfaction to the villagers, and the saint appeared equally pleased. He honourably fulfilled his part of the bargain, allowing one or two drops to fall, as it were just to show off his power, and then sending us home dry.

The next afternoon I was waited upon by three picturesque peasants, who gave their name as George Simon, George Peter, and Stavro (Cross), Naoum, all of Rokotina. A Turkish official happened to be with me when they arrived; I explained that I thought they would speak with greater freedom in his absence, and he left without the slightest demur.

The peasants, who were all men of venerable age, then proceeded to unfold a story which hardly agreed in a single detail with that which I had heard the day before. To begin with, there were no Moslems in the village of Rokotina, and therefore whatever cause had induced them to quit their homes it could hardly have been the oppressions of Moslem neighbours. In the second place, they had not committed the heroic act of burning their own houses, that work having been effectually done by a Bulgarian band. The Comitadjis had paid them more than one visit, killing four of them on the first occasion, and six more afterwards, for the usual offence—refusal to turn Exarchist.

The visitors further told me that they had owned their houses and a little land, as well as cattle and implements of husbandry, and they tilled the farm of a Turkish aga. Since they were burnt out, and had taken refuge in Megarevo, the aga's land was lying desert, like their own.

I asked why they did not make an effort to rebuild their homes and resume their former labour. They replied that to go back to Rokotina would be to expose themselves to certain death at the hands of the Bulgars. Moreover, their grown-up children had now

gone to America, and they had sold off a great part of their cattle and effects. They were living on the proceeds of such sales.

How did they expect to support themselves when they had nothing more to sell, I inquired. They expected to be supported by the Greek kingdom, as martyrs in the Hellenist cause.

I gave them four shillings apiece, and was rewarded with a burst of gratitude. The most venerable of the three exclaimed that although they knew the fate that was in store for them if they returned to Rokotina, they were prepared to do so at my command. They were willing to die, if it would afford me any gratification.

I declined to accept the sacrifice.

After they had gone I submitted the two versions of the Rokotina incident to the Greek Consul, from whom I received a third, which is probably more correct. The Rokotinites had not burnt their own village, but neither had they been the victims of an unprovoked aggression. One of their number had been found among the slain after an attack by a Greek band on a neighbouring village of mixed Serbs and Bulgars, and the attack on Rokotina had been made in reprisal. The Megarevites were displeased with the presence in their midst of the Rokotinites, *because they spoke Bulgarian*, and had therefore spread the story that they had burnt their own houses.

The Consul shared my view that the villagers would have done better to go back and rebuild their homes. They should have asked their bey to assist them.

It is evident that the charity of Athens, like all charity, is liable to be abused. But in a country where there is no poor-law, it is difficult to suggest what can be done with the victims of these miserable raids.

I had visited not a few Christian villages; before leaving Macedonia I decided to see a Moslem one, and the Government Inspector of the village schools

undertook to go with me. He was an Albanian, and he selected the Albanian village of Kajani, lying up in the mountains on the main road from Monastir to the Adriatic.

We drove for a couple of hours, meeting string after string of ox-carts laden with charcoal and honey for the town of Monastir. As we drew near Kajani we entered the region of winter, and the ground was covered with snow.

Kajani has 550 inhabitants, most of whom are agas. They are all landowners, and, as far as I could understand, the aga is simply the well-to-do yeoman who lives on his land, as distinguished from the cottager, who has to supplement his income by occasional work for another.

On our arrival we alighted at the school, where we were received by the turbaned master and one or two of the leading inhabitants. The school was very bright and well-kept, and contained forty boys, and half as many girls. Among the boys I remarked a tiny fellow of four or five, who turned out to be the schoolmaster's son. He had on the desk in front of him a small portfolio in velvet embroidered with a text from the Koran. My guide explained to me that it was the Turkish custom to tempt a child to go to school for the first time with a bribe of this kind. The embroidered text was an exhortation to study.

Although the villagers speak Albanian among themselves, the language taught in the school is Turkish. The Government seems to be taking a leaf out of the Hellenist book in this respect.

I solicited a holiday for the scholars, and it was granted with evident pleasure. But the demeanour of the young Moslems betrayed no sign of unseemly joy. One by one each small boy rose up and marched seriously out of the room, as if on his way to a funeral. I can only hope that they were more gay when they were by themselves. But the solemnity of the young Turk is something fearful and wonderful.

I once attempted to tickle a Turkish child. It is an experience I would gladly forget.

As we were quitting the school building I found in the entrance a small boy weeping bitterly. One of his shoes had been carried off by another scholar, and the road outside was deep in slush. But one of his school-fellows had come to the rescue, and run into the neighbouring mosque in search of a pair of shoes. He came back with them, and helped the little fellow to put them on.—I was among Albanian Moslems. Who shall despair of teaching such a race to live on the same terms of kindness with their neighbours as among themselves?

We were invited to take our lunch in a very well-kept house, the cleanest I had found in any Macedonian village.

I put a few discreet questions to my host on political affairs, and he expressed himself very well satisfied with the Government, and especially with certain changes recently made. The villagers now pay a tax on their acreage instead of the old-fashioned tithe on produce—a change which I believe they owe to the Powers. It is pleasant to find one solid benefit to place to the credit of European interference. My Albanian host considered the amount of the new tax moderate. He preferred the new system mainly because under the old one they were unable to take their grain to market until the tax-gatherer had made his rounds, and this delay was often a cause of heavy loss.

It is fair to remember that tithes were still collected in England within living memory. I do not put forward that fact and similar ones as a reason for not urging reforms which are clearly beneficial upon the Turkish Government, but merely as a reason for urging them in a less impatient and scornful spirit. It is a political axiom that what is best for the people is also best for their rulers in the long run, and this particular reform is a case in point.

My Kajani host further told me that the Government had just reduced the period of military service from six years to three. He preferred rendering this service to paying the *bedel*, or tax in lieu, which is levied on the Christians. It was a good experience for a young man, and a means of seeing the world. He himself had been as far as Tripoli as a soldier.

I took down the name of my host as Ferat Yachar, but I fancy the first of these names is also written Fèré and Ferid. The delightful freedom of spelling which prevails in Fairyland is a wholesome change from that morbid exactness which is the disease of Western education.

I made something like a set speech to the assembled notables of Kajani, to this effect :

“I am visiting your country to inquire into the troubles between the Greeks and Bulgars. While I have been here I have been much struck by the peaceable behaviour of the Moslems. While the Christians are fighting each other, and committing all kinds of outrages, I have found that you are keeping the peace, and refraining from violence. I have come here to-day on purpose to congratulate you on your good behaviour, and to urge you to continue in it. By so doing you are rendering the greatest service to your Sultan and to your religion.”

I had reason to hope that these observations would make a good impression, and that they were likely to be widely circulated in the district. The gentleman who took me to Kajani remarked, on our way home, that my visit would be the principal topic of conversation for the next week. He told me that the whole country-side had heard that there was an English pasha going about among the villages, and that the people were much excited over it.

Ferat Yachar pressed me very warmly to pass the night under his roof, an invitation which I was sorry that I could not accept. By my request his children



were brought into the room—the women of the household remained invisible—and they stood, four of them, in a row, with their eyes respectfully bent on the ground. I offered to take one with me, and place him in a school to learn English, and his father accepted at once ; but, learning that the mother was less willing, I adjourned the offer for the time being. I felt some doubt as to whether it would be taken in good part by the authorities, who feel some jealousy of the missionary schools. In my own opinion it is rendering a service to the Turkish Government to spread the knowledge of English among the Moslems. But I am strongly convinced that, in order to do any real good in Turkey, it is necessary first of all to acquire the confidence of those whom you desire to serve, and that is a thing which takes time.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE LIBERATION OF RAKOVO

The work of liberation—An Exarchist gendarmery officer—A Patriarchist village—Rural life in Macedonia—An oppressed taxpayer—Peter takes his precautions—Turkish tyranny—Peasant fear—The trail of the Comitadjis—A voice from America—A typical Turkish atrocity—The tyrant trembles—The grievance of Obsirna.

ABOUT the time that I was setting out from Europe a band of liberators fell one night upon the Macedonian village of Rakovo, and burned it to the ground.

Rakovo lies about four hours from Monastir, and I decided to visit it in order to see for myself how the work of liberation is carried on. Before going I mentioned my intention to the Greek Bishop administering the diocese of Monastir.

The Bishop told me that, shortly before the attack on their village, the people had come to him to complain that an Italian officer of gendarmery had advised them to turn Exarchists. The officer complained of gave the explanation that it must have been his dragoman, an explanation which I can fully believe. He had not since dismissed the dragoman, neither had he thought it worth while to take any other step to assure the villagers that the dragoman had not spoken with his authority.

The dragoman's advice could not have been sounder if he had been in the counsels of the Exarchists,

instead of being an agent of the Powers who have insisted on aiding the Turkish Government to suppress the Exarchist bands. A Bulgarian band duly arrived in fulfilment of the warning, and set fire to every house in Rakovo in which there was no armed defender. How many of the inhabitants would have perished can only be guessed. But the flames that shot up in the night from the burning village were seen by a Greek band encamped on the mountains. The Greeks hastened to the rescue of their brethren, and, after a brief combat in which two or three lives were lost on both sides, the Bulgarians fled.

That is a typical example of how the Folk War is waged. It is the warfare of the Dark Ages. We seem to be reading of the Danes and Saxons.

The burnt-out inhabitants took refuge in Monastir, where they were kindly received and cared for by the Greek community. The Greek charitable organisation of the town undertook the work of rebuilding their ruined homes for them; and it was the contractor employed on the work who acted as my guide on the present occasion.

The first part of the journey was by carriage, over a rough and broken road, across the plain of Monastir. At one point we were met by some peasants, who had come out to warn us that the way was foundrous farther on, and to direct us by another route. These local roads are the curse of Rumelia, because they are the first things that strike every traveller, and by them he judges the whole country. They are scarcely better than those of Russia.

The carriage way ended at Obsirna, a smaller village, lying at the entrance of the valley which has Rakovo at its upper end.

The plain across which we had driven is one of the empty cells of the Macedonian honeycomb. The invading bands wander along the dividing ridges, and descend where they please. The more I studied local conditions, the more difficult it became to hope

that the Folk War could be suppressed by the methods hitherto employed.

The village of Obsirna, I was informed by the inhabitants, contains only twenty-five houses. It is a typical instance of the fallacy of reckoning five persons to a house, in estimating this population. While I was questioning the people about their means of livelihood, I learned that some houses were richer in labour while others were richer in land. Thus, one patriarch was pointed out to me as having, I think, a dozen men in his "house." In short, we have here the primitive family group as it has existed at one time or another half over the world.

These villagers are still living in a state of society which is familiar to sociologists. They own houses and lands and cattle, but they own them in families, and not as individuals. The members of the household whose labour is not needed at home are sent to earn money in the town, or further afield. The money is not regarded as theirs. It is earned on behalf of the household to which they belong, and in which they still retain their proprietary rights. Their earnings, or whatever they bring back with them, will go into the common fund, and they will be housed and fed on the same footing as the rest.

It would be misleading to speak of such labourers as domestic serfs, because they are, of course, the descendants or kinsmen of their patriarch. But that seems to be their economic condition. Even when they emigrate to the United States they continue to acknowledge their father's authority, and remit him a portion of their earnings.

This village of twenty-five "houses" owns no less than thirty mills, driven by the water which issues from the valley above. I examined one, owned by a wealthy villager named Peter. It was a small affair; one pair of millstones only were revolving inside a shed built over the stream, and the contents

of a sack of corn were being dribbled out through a hopper. The mill-owner, who has three such mills on his estate, told me that Obsirna formerly ground the corn of all the villages round about. Since the Folk War broke out their Bulgarian neighbours had ceased to bring their corn to these Patriarchist mills, but the more tolerant Moslems continued to come as before.

Peter proved a most interesting acquaintance, perhaps as favourable a type as could be found of the Christian peasant of Rumelia. He met us, along with the priest and headman, on our arrival, and conducted us to a house apparently selected for its superior accommodation. It was quite equal in size and convenience to an old-fashioned Swiss chalet, in those Swiss valleys which have not yet been irrigated by tourist gold. Indeed most of these Rumelian villages compared favourably with some I have seen in the Canton of Valais, particularly as regards cleanliness. The house I was shown into stood in a walled enclosure containing barns, stables, and pigsties. Scattered about the farmyard, I noticed a number of small wooden troughs, like dug-out canoes. These were the property of the pigs. In England the pigs have only one trough in common; in Macedonia each pig has his own. The Macedonian pig is more civilised than his English brother.

Peter and his friends brought us upstairs and gave us wooden stools to sit on while coffee was being prepared. Peter was the most eloquent of the party, and from him I obtained my first real glimpse at the iniquities of Turkish rule.

The occasion was a favourable one. There were no gendarmes present, the vigilance of the authorities had been so far allayed, the room contained only sympathisers. I myself had come thither under the ægis of their Bishop—before my return I was asked to become their advocate with the Bishop, as will be seen hereafter. It was a golden opportunity to learn the truth about European Turkey, to penetrate

beneath the glozing apologies of the corrupt functionaries, and see the frightful machinery of Turkish government at work.

And Peter told me a dismal tale. The greatest grievance, of course, was the taxation. Peter owns a hundred sheep—how many English villagers own three mills and a hundred sheep?—and on each he has to pay a tax of five piastres and ten paras, that is to say, an English shilling. Moreover, the tax is collected with unreasonable rigour. On the last visit of the tax-gatherer one of the sheep was dangerously ill. Peter drew his attention to its languishing condition, but in vain. The tax-gatherer, obedient to instructions from Salonika, was obdurate, and the suffering animal was inscribed. Within three days it had breathed its last!

Peter has also to pay nearly thirty shillings a year for exemption from military service. This tax is called the *bedel*, or *bedale*. The other men in his house pay fifteen shillings. He pays £12 a year in English money under the head of tithes. His mills pay £3 more. The tithe on wine comes to fifteen shillings. The road-tax is £1, for which he hardly gets value. Altogether he pays thirty Turkish pounds a year—say £25 English.

That is the total deduction, whether in the nature of rent, rates, taxes or tithes, from Peter's profits on his farm, his mills, his stock, his vineyard, and the labour of his household. A Greek friend estimates that Peter's sheep, which graze free on the mountain, ought to bring him in £50 a year. The tax on them would therefore appear to be a tithe. At that rate, his net annual income should be not far short of £200. And, as the same friend observed, a hundred pounds in Macedonia is equal to a thousand in England. The salary of the priest of Obsirna, I ascertained, is eight Turkish pounds a year; but he receives gifts of food in addition.

As we have seen, these taxes are oppressively

collected. It is not only on the sheep that the tax-gatherer casts a jaundiced eye. When Peter exhibits to him a hundred okes of wine as the produce of his vineyard, the tax-gatherer remorselessly writes down five hundred. It reminded me of a picturesque incident in one of the Comitadji books. The author has arrived hotfoot on the track of the tax-gatherer. The peasants make a similar complaint, and show him the small heap of corn-cobs which the sceptical tax-gatherer has just multiplied by five. The sympathetic visitor counts every corn-cob, and pronounces a burning malediction on the oppressor.

Alas! I have been a cross-examining counsel. I asked Peter if it had ever occurred to him to conceal any portion of his produce before the tax-gatherer's arrival. He replied, with perfect frankness, "When we have much we hide it; when we have little we are afraid to."

The unfortunate tax-gatherer evidently has to trust rather to his judgment than his eyesight.

By this time I had almost abandoned the hope of coming across any genuine Turkish outrage, any bona-fide instance of those horrors which have moved the Exarchist population to deliver themselves, or at least have moved kindly hearts in Sofia to deliver them, from their chains. I do not think that this was because I was less persevering than previous travellers who have enlightened Europe on the subject. I went through the country with my eyes and ears open, and I missed no opportunity of putting questions to peasants who have long been taught that Europe expects them to be against the Government. I can only attribute the result to my having had some experience of peasants at home and abroad, and some slight practice in the art of eliciting the truth, both as a counsel and as a judge.

Undaunted by previous failures, I put the oft-repeated question. Beyond oppressive taxation, had Obsirna suffered anything at the hands of the authorities?

And this time it seemed that I was not to be disappointed. Suffered?—it was Peter who answered me—ah! yes, they had suffered, they were still suffering, grievous things. Armed soldiers raided their peaceful village, ransacked their houses under the pretence of searching for concealed arms, stole their possessions and terrified their women. It was the truth coming out at last. The Comitadji writers were justified; it was possible that they had even understated their case.

With my note-book open in my hand, I invited Peter to furnish me with details of these outrages, and he eagerly did so. It appeared that he was himself the principal sufferer. In fact, his house was the only one that had as yet been searched—searched, mark you, in spite of the personal assurance given by the headman to the sergeant that Peter was a law-abiding citizen. And wherefore, then, had he been singled out for this persecution? He was the victim of appearances. On their first visit—they had been three times in all—the gendarmes had most unfortunately found arms concealed on his premises. The arms consisted of a revolver and a number of rifle cartridges. The revolver was an old and worthless weapon preserved by Peter as a curiosity, much as halberts and crossbows are preserved in other private collections. The cartridges were there by accident. A short time previously Peter had been shot at by a Bulgarian on the road. His horse had been wounded—Peter pressed me to adjourn to the stable and inspect the wound with my own eyes. The Bulgarian had fled from pursuit, after dropping a quantity of cartridges on the ground. Peter had picked up these cartridges and brought them home as mementoes, in fact, trophies; but they were Bulgarian cartridges, and the gendarmes had placed a false construction on his possession of them. He had even been dragged off to the prison of Monastir and detained there for some days on suspicion.



I invited details of the robberies committed by the gendarmes, or soldiers—for the peasants seem to draw no distinction between the two forces. On one occasion, after a visit from the sergeant, Peter had found himself the poorer by a pair of stockings.

I asked if any woman had been touched. No; but they were frightened when they saw the soldiers come.

Such was the story of Peter, as told to me by himself in the presence of his friends and neighbours. I did not doubt one word of it; I dispensed with the corroborative evidence of the wounded horse. My sympathies were wholly with Peter in his undeserved misfortunes. But what had I come out to see? Three vilayets drenched in blood to save Peter from the loss of a pair of stockings?

That the women of Obsirna were alarmed by the sight of soldiers in their midst was very likely true, although in other villages the presence of the soldiers seemed very welcome. Speaking broadly, I should be inclined to say that many of these Rumelian peasants are afraid of the Turkish troops. They are equally afraid of ghosts. The question is whether one fear is any better founded than the other, or whether both are traditional instincts which time and education will obliterate.

We must again fall back on the Comparative Method. I once took part in a Liberal meeting in an English village. It was well attended. The candidate spoke long and eloquently, but did not elicit a single cheer. A Nonconformist minister followed in a humorous vein, but did not elicit a single laugh. The other speakers were not more fortunate than they. We were coming away, feeling very much depressed, when one of the villagers ran after and caught up the carriage. He said:

"That was a grand meeting. Everybody was delighted."

"But you never cheered! You never laughed!"

"Ah! that was because the squire had a man sitting at the back of the room watching us. But we were drinking in every word."

Now, that is peasant fear. It is the inherited instinct of the Folk. Every Liberal candidate in a rural constituency in the south of England must have come across it. It is a commonplace with Liberal agents that this fear exists, and that it must be allowed for in their arrangements. The fear may be well-grounded, or it may be ill-grounded; but while it still flourishes in England, in spite of ballots and board-schools and halfpenny papers, and all the other guarantees of freedom, we must be prepared to find something very like it when we go abroad.

Whatever be the case with regard to the women, the men of Obsirna are not wanting in courage. The village is renowned in the country-side for its stubborn refusal to accept liberation at the hands of the Comitadjis. Even in the rising of 1903, when so many Patriarchist villages were lured away by the Bulgarian promises, Obsirna held out. I found that the example made of its neighbour, Rakovo, had not daunted the spirit of Obsirna. In one house into which I was taken—Peter's own, I believe—I found the roof too low for comfort. My host laughed as he remarked, "We are waiting till the Bulgarians burn our village to rebuild our houses in better style."

Others hinted, in the same light-hearted tone, that when the Bulgarians came they would find Obsirna ready for them. In short, they seemed to be looking forward, with some eagerness, to such a visit; or, as they say in Ireland, they were spoiling for a fight.

However much such a spirit is to be regretted, there is something extremely cruel in the spirit which can make no allowance for it. Humanitarians are too ready to put human nature in handcuffs.

Obsirna may defy the Bulgarian bands, but so long as she speaks a dialect resembling the Bulgarian, she stands in danger of liberation, not by them, but by the Powers. The danger has been realised. Obsirna has started a little school for the first time, and a patriotic native is training the new generation in Greek.

We rode on to Rakovo on horses belonging to the friendly Peter, who would accept no payment in return. The little valley was as peaceful as if no armed band had ever traversed it, and on the hills above the sheep were browsing in happy ignorance of taxes and tax-gatherers.

After an hour or two we reached the opening into another small upland plain like that of Nisia, and in the neck, commanding the issue from the valley, stood what had once been Rakovo.

It was a wilderness of ruins. Rakovo had been a larger place than Obsirna, possessing a fine church and a considerable school, and the desolation covered half a mile. Blackened walls were standing roofless amid chaotic heaps of fallen stones over which it was difficult to clamber. The one or two houses that had escaped rose amid the wreck like a few solitary teeth in the jaw of some decrepit crone. The efforts of the Greek charitable society had completed about twenty new ones, of rough but solid construction, yet even their courtyards were still cumbered with ruins. Such of the inhabitants as had ventured back wandered with drooping heads among the shapeless rubbish heaps, searching for the site of their homes. They seemed rather ghosts than men. I did not hear them laugh at the Bulgarians. Rakovo had been liberated indeed.

The only cheerful spirit in the place was a man newly returned from the United States. He had been thrown out of work by the financial crisis over there; and so the collapse of the Trusts had sent

a little ripple of distress all the way into ruined Rakovo. For, of course, he also had remained, on the other side of the Atlantic, a vassal of the "house." He introduced me to his venerable father. The American had told me he belonged to the Republican Party, and I wondered whether he had given his support to President Roosevelt on orders received from Macedonia.

The priest of Rakovo also had a son in the United States, who was prospering as a baker. He showed me a letter from his boy, and it proved to be a piece of evidence bearing on this inquiry; for it was written on a sheet of paper with the printed heading:

**"GREEK MACEDON BAKERY"**

Consider that, Messieurs the Comitadjis! You may do your worst to Bulgarise Rakovo; you will find it harder to Bulgarise the Greek Macedon Bakery!

What an answer to the claim of Sofia, the claim that every Macedonian who uses a Slave dialect must belong to her! Here, in the heart of Macedonia, on the very track of her desolating bands, amid the charred monuments of her vengeance, I had come upon this clear voice, speaking from a continent of whose existence Alexander did not dream, to tell me, to tell Europe, to tell even the agents of Sofia, what the Macedonians "wish themselves."

The story of the destruction of the village was told me by the muktar, a man of strong but not very amiable character, who barely thanked me for what my dragoman advised me would be a substantial contribution to the relief fund.

He said that a small party of soldiers had come into the place about an hour before the Bulgarians, and warned them that they were about to be attacked. The officer in command had asked where they would wish him to post his men for their defence. The muktar had replied, with some harshness, "We are

not generals; you ought to know your own business. Post your men where you think best"; and the soldiers had then decamped without waiting for the enemy. The Greek band, on the other hand, had performed marvels, slaying no less than sixty Bulgars, with a loss of only two on their own side.

I had not the heart to cross-examine the poor creatures amid their ruined homes, but the greater part of the Bulgarian corpses must have been mysteriously spirited away during the night, as when the Greek Consul arrived on the scene next day he found only two or three.

The headman of Rakovo was clearly no Turcophile, but I shall not seek to attenuate his evidence on that account. He led me round what had been the village, and pointed out the site of the school, remarking that it was the second time that their school had been burnt down in three years. I asked who had burned it the first time, and he answered, "The soldiers."

At last! Take heart, my Christian friend, for at last we are on the scent of a real Turkish atrocity. It has not been easy work; we have had to inquire long and painfully, but now our perseverance is about to be rewarded, and we may say of the Turk what we will.

I asked why the soldiers had been guilty of such a deed.

"They did it by mistake. They had been sent against a Bulgarian village which had taken part in the insurrection, and they came to Rakovo by mistake. The soldiers admitted that they had done wrong."

One feels that they ought not to have admitted it. The outrage is robbed of its full flavour. The soldiers ought to have treated the affair as a jest, and cut the throats of any complaining villagers. They do so in all impartial books about Macedonia.

"Did the Government do nothing?"

"Oh yes, the Government paid for rebuilding the

school. They gave so many piastres a day to the men who were at work on it till it was finished."

My Christian friend, what are we to do? These wretched peasants give us no help. How can we work up the right degree of indignation against a Sultan whose soldiers apologise when they have done wrong, and who repairs the wrong almost before he is asked? The ground keeps slipping from under our feet. We shall have to look elsewhere for an object for our philanthropic wrath. We may even have to turn it on some Christian monarch. Suppose we try the ruler of the Congo State?

The inhabitants of Rakovo, fresh from their experience of the Christian liberator, hardly showed proper dread of the Moslem tyrant. Thirty of the ferocious soldiers at whose name Europe has learned to shudder were now quartered in the village, and the villagers, so far from craving deliverance from these "official bandits," were practically hugging them to their bosoms.

Summon up all your fortitude, my Christian friend, and let us listen to the Christian headman of what was Rakovo. He is making a complaint; he considers that he has a grievance against the lieutenant in command of the Turkish troops. He, the mukhtar, has given the lieutenant quarters in a house in the centre of the village. But the officer has objected to the accommodation, and requested the headman's leave to shift his quarters to a more salubrious house on the outskirts. The headman has refused to gratify the tyrant's caprice. "Stay where I have put you," he had said to him sternly. "You are wanted there for our protection. If you don't like my decision, go and complain to your vali!"

Is there such a thing as the *reductio ad absurdum* in Fairyland? Is it possible for fanaticism to see when it has overshot the mark? If so, I commend to you, my Christian friend, to you, Messieurs the

Comitadji writers, who have deafened Europe with the wrongs of Macedonia, that little picture of Macedonia as it is. I had come out to see another Macedonia from this. I had come out to see poverty-stricken Christians cowering before every passing Turk. And in this remote spot, up among the snow-laden hills, I had found a Turkish officer, in command of a detachment sent thither to protect the Christians from each other, denied his choice of a lodging, bullied by a Christian headman, and told to complain if he dared.

He had dared. The Governor-General of Monastir, to whom I submitted the case, had already heard of it. The mukhtar had lodged the lieutenant in the next house to his own, out of a selfish desire for his personal security. The lieutenant had found the house insanitary, and the rest of the villagers were quite willing for him to shift his quarters. But the headman was firm, and I fancied that the vali himself was half afraid to interfere lest he should find himself browbeaten by the Consuls, and held up to execration in half the newspapers of Europe.

Such is Turkey in Europe, as I found it.

Only one stroke remained to complete the picture, and it awaited me on my return through Obsirna. The tax-ridden villagers, with Peter at their head, approached me with a petition. Would I, on my return to Monastir, speak to their Bishop on their behalf? They had a grievance, a very mild one to be sure, against the Bishop. They did not think he was showing enough energy in the business of their new church.

Had they no church already? I inquired. They had a church, but it was not good enough. They wanted to put up a more imposing edifice, and they had saved up the money to pay for it, with some help from the Bishop. Permission had been applied for, the firman had come down from Constantinople,

but after the burning of Rakovo it had been suspended, as they believed, lest the erection of the new church should draw down on them the attention of the Exarchists. But they were prepared to take the risk, and they begged me to stir up the Bishop, that he might in turn stir up the vali.

Peter, Peter, my honest, nay, my generous, friend—for did you not lend me three horses without charge?—it goes to my heart to tell you that if, out of what the tax-gatherer has spared, you have enough money to build a superfluous and splendid church you must be better off than certain Christians living very near indeed to the centre of civilisation, almost within the shadow of a great cathedral, under the most enlightened of County Councils, in the full blaze of newspaper publicity, with half a dozen Bishops and ten thousand Christian ministers to attend to their least cry!

### *Postscript*

The confident tone of the Obsirna villagers in speaking of a Bulgarian attack showed me pretty clearly that the revolver and cartridges captured from Peter did not exhaust their store of concealed arms. Not long after my visit the authorities made a more successful perquisition, and fifteen of the unlucky villagers were carried off to prison in consequence. It seems a cruel thing to punish the loyal Christians for taking measures to defend themselves against the aggressions of robbers and blood-thirsty assassins sent against them by a foreign State. But such are the orders of the Powers, and the Turks dare not favour the victims more than the terrorists.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE DOCUMENTS OF HILMI PASHA

The warfare against the bands—The work of the financial commission—King Log and King Stork—The work of the Internal Organisation—The work of the Reformed Gendarmery—The destruction of Déré-Muslim—The blood-drinkers

ON my return from Monastir to Salonika, I received the promised papers from the Inspector-General of the three vilayets, a selection from which I will now lay before the reader. What follows does not come within the category of direct evidence, obtained and tested by myself; it is official evidence, but it does not represent the Turkish view merely. In Macedonia the Government machine works under the supervision of the Austrian and Russian Civil Agents, and the principal document which I have reproduced is a report by a French gendarmery officer to his own chief.

At the head of this official information I may place the statistics of encounters between the Turkish forces, soldiers and gendarmes, and the Christian bands during the last two years. In the original, the place and the results of each fight are set forth in full detail, but I will content myself with reproducing the totals. It will be noticed that the dates are of the Hejra.

# TURKISH OPERATIONS

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## YEAR 1322

BANDS.	No. of Encounters.	Killed.	Wounded.	Cap- tured.	TURKS.	
					Killed.	Wounded.
Bulgarian . .	56	244	3	17	41	54
Greek . . .	32	180	8	59	19	21
Servian . . .	10	40	—	—	6	18
TOTAL . .	98	464	11	76	66	93

## YEAR 1323

BANDS.	No. of Encounters.	Killed.	Wounded.	Cap- tured.	TURKS.	
					Killed.	Wounded.
Bulgarian . .	46	269	1	10	27	38
Greek . . .	24	80	10	37	9	16
Servian . . .	9	46	3	7	4	2
TOTAL . .	79	395	14	54	40	56

These figures were offered to me to prove that the Government was exercising its activity against all the bands equally, and I think they do so. The difference in the number of encounters may be taken to correspond pretty fairly with that in the number of bands. The Bulgarian bands, having been longest at work, are naturally the most numerous, while the Servians at present confine their operations to a corner of the country, bordering on their own frontier.

The contrast between the numbers of the killed and of the prisoners also tallies with the character of the warfare. The Bulgarian bands, as a rule, manage to avoid meeting the troops in the open country. They are usually surprised in some village in which they have concealed themselves, and, as they refuse to come out of the houses, they are surrounded and burnt. A graphic account of what takes place on these occasions will be found below. The Greeks, on the

other hand, do not consider that they are in the field against the Government forces, and on that account a larger proportion of them are willing to surrender.

The disproportion between the losses of the bands and those of the troops must be considered as due in part to fairy arithmetic. The bands themselves boast of very contrary figures. At the same time, in such an encounter as that described hereafter there seems a probability that the loss of the Comitadjis would be greater than that of the troops. In case of a fight among the hills, the proportion would probably be reversed.

The principal reflection called forth by these statistics, however, is the hopelessness of ending the Folk War by the means till now employed. To kill or otherwise dispose of four or five hundred men in twelve months is to trifle with the business. The Internal Organisation must have many thousands of peasants affiliated to it; the Principality of Bulgaria can send men across the frontier much faster than the Turks can dispose of them at that rate.

The Turkish Government certainly has not deceived itself with the belief that the war can be stamped out in this fashion. It has been restrained from using more effective measures by the Powers; and it therefore must be taken that the Powers have been deliberately prolonging the present state of things. It may be taken, further, that they have not done so in the interests of anybody but themselves. The Bulgars have sown the seed, but others are preparing to reap the harvest.

The next papers before me are in the form of extracts from the minutes of the International Financial Commission, over which the Inspector-General of the three vilayets presides.

The functions of this remarkable body bear a certain resemblance to those of the Legislative Council in a Crown Colony, the difference being that their decisions are subject to be over-ruled by the Sultan; but as the

Sultan himself is liable to be over-ruled by the six Powers acting in concert, the Council is something more than an advisory board.

The point which distinguishes this body from the similar commissions which have been appointed in the past to deal with the finances of Egypt and of Greece, is that its appointment has not been due to the bankruptcy of the country, and it does not represent creditors. It was appointed in consequence of the Bulgarian agitation, and constitutes a recognition or declaration on the part of the Powers that the Turkish Government has failed in its duty. In short, it is a distinct step towards the establishment of an international protectorate of Macedonia, and, judging by all the precedents, it is likely to be followed by the practical severance of the three vilayets from the Turkish empire.

The present object of the Powers,<sup>1</sup> in so far as they have a common object, appears to be to effect this severance peaceably, by making it so gradual that there will never come a moment at which the Turks will take up arms in despair. Thus, they have begun with financial reforms, which have been welcomed by the Moslem population in some places, as I have shown above. They have established the beginnings of an international constabulary; and their further proposals included the strengthening of that force, the appointment of international judges, and making the Inspector-General, or his successor, responsible to the Powers instead of to the Sultan.

It is clear that the successful working of such a scheme depends on a great number of uncertain factors: the good faith of the Powers themselves, the pacific attitude of the Turks, and the acquiescence of the Christian population.

On the first appointment of the Commission it was flooded with appeals and complaints from the Christians against the Turkish authorities. The papers before

<sup>1</sup> It must be borne in mind that these arrangements are still working.

me exhibit the character of some of these complaints, and the result of the Commission's dealing with them.

"SESSION OF JUNE 2, 1906

"The session began at 3.30 p.m., under the presidency of H.E. the Inspector-General.

"Present: the Councillor of Germany, the Civil Agent of Austria-Hungary, the Councillor of France, the Councillor of Great Britain, the Councillor of Italy, the Civil Agent of Russia, the Ottoman Councillor.

"The report of the Inspector of the Commission, Oskan Effendi, was read, from which it appeared that the complaints of the villagers of Bouf (vilayet of Monastir), brought before the Commission in its session of April 25, 1906, were void of foundation. It is, on the contrary, the interests of the Treasury which are neglected in this village. Thus, six mills relieved of taxation in 1320 as having been destroyed in 1319, were rebuilt the same year, and though they are to-day in full work, no information has been given by the council of elders to the surveyor of taxes.

"The Inspector-General will give to the vilayet of Monastir the necessary instructions to revise the taxation of the said village."

The villagers of Bouf must be feeling that they had better have left well alone. From the minutes of the session of August 25, 1906, I extract the following complaint:

"A petition was read from one Naoum Gogo, of the town of Monastir, who complained of having to pay 4,000 piastres (£40) as commutation of tithe for the property which he owns in the village of Orizar-i-Zir, whereas before the institution of this system he only paid 1,500 piastres (£15) for the same property. The Commission ordered its general secretary to make an inquiry on the subject of this complaint, and to communicate the result."

The result was communicated at the sitting of August 28, held at Monastir.

"The inquiry in question has proved the absurdity of this complaint, the allegations in which have been found baseless and completely erroneous."

Naoum Gogo, of Monastir, must be reckoned among those who have not much reason to congratulate themselves on the substitution of European for Turkish taxation. The village of Medjkofta, in the caza of Istip, has also failed to find sympathy among the Civil Agents and Councillors of the Powers.

According to the complaint of this village, the authorities wanted it to pay a double tax for 411 sheep, on the pretext that these animals had been kept off the register of taxation—in short, concealed. The petitioners alleged that at the moment of counting these particular sheep were in another part of the caza, where they were duly taxed.

"The kaimakam of Istip, from whom an explanation was asked on this subject, replied that at the time of the first revision he had ascertained that 769 sheep were withheld from registration. This fact is certified by the council of elders of the village. The surveyors at this first revision having declared that three flocks had been concealed during the process, a second revision was ordered, which, in fact, brought about the discovery of 386 sheep which had been concealed. The kaimakam added that the inhabitants of this village made it a practice to hide their animals every year."

What is a poor, puzzled Commission to do when it receives such a complaint, and such an explanation? Clearly some one must be sent to count the sheep of Medjkofta, and as clearly some one ought to pay his expenses.

The minutes proceed :

"The Commission, nevertheless, decided to order inspector Rachid Bey to hold an inquiry into this affair. If the result shall be to prove the groundless-

ness of the appeal, the complainants shall be made to pay the expenses of the inquiry. Information of this decision shall be given beforehand to the villagers, through the kaimakam. If they persist in their appeal, the inquiry shall take place on the above condition."

When did an unreasonable litigant ever abandon his appeal under a threat of costs being given against him? The complainants of Medjkofta duly persisted, and their persistence cost them £12.

"Inspector Rachid Bey communicated by his report of November 2, 1907, the result of the inquiry which he was ordered to hold.

"Rachid Bey concluded that he is satisfied that 336 of the 386 sheep have really been withheld from registration. As for the other 50, the inquiry has proved that their withholders had bought them in the interval between the registration and the revision. In these circumstances, and having regard to the decision taken on the subject of this question in the session of July 24, 1907, the Commission decided to repay the double tax to the proprietors of the 50 sheep; but the withholders of the 336 sheep found to have been withheld shall be made to pay the expenses of the inquiry, amounting to 1,215 piastres."

And so justice is done, and, thanks to the exertions of his Excellency, Hilmi Pasha, and of the Civil Agents and Councillors of the six great Powers, fifty sheep in the caza of Istip are no longer unfairly taxed.

But the imposition of costs as a method of discouraging frivolous appeals seems to mark a new era in the history of Rumelia. The Commissioners have evidently learnt something. And the Folk must have learnt something too, something more wholesome than agreeable. They have learned the difference between missionaries and newspaper correspondents, and writers of impartial works on Macedonia, on the one hand, and business men on the other. They have exchanged King Log for King Stork.

The following letter, found on the dead body of a Comitadji, throws some light on the spirit and methods of the Internal Organisation. They do not appear to place much reliance on the efforts of their European friends. They are clearly preparing to take advantage of the retirement of the Greek bands, due to the request of the Powers. At the same time they show some anxiety with regard to the appearance of Albanians on the scene. As will be seen presently, the Bulgars are trying to turn the Albanians against the Greeks.

*7th September, 1907.*

*"From THE COUNCIL OF CHIEFS IN THE CIRCUMSCRIPTION  
OF CASTORIA*

"We received yours of the 3rd instant. By the same messenger we had answered your previous letter. We intend to take measures in order to send constantly into your circumscription an inspector whose mission will be to put order into affairs, and to assign the men and the chiefs to spheres of action.

"Let us know what is the spirit of the population after the disasters which happened this year in your part. Do there exist any remains of Greek bands at Kirtchichta, and near the monastery of Otchichky? In the affirmative case, and if you are aware which regions they wander over, you will inform us in order to advise the Albanian band. It appears that the Greeks are retiring themselves since the beginning of the autumn. In our circumscription there are but five or six native Greek bandits at Bouf, and seven or eight in the Morihovo region.

"Have you encountered an Albanian band which travelled the Presba region one month ago? If you saw them, you are asked to inform us how they are armed, from where they get their funds, their object, and the centre of their movements.

"I have no important information to give you now. The Civil Agents try to make judicial reforms; Turkey refuses. Old stories! If this winter there is no important change in the situation of Macedonia, it



will be necessary to work severely next year. Because Turkey will be forced into war.

"On the 24th of August, Ivan Naoumoff, a member of the inspection band, was killed near the village of Bilitsa (caza Kirtchovo).

"On the 5th our band attacked near Goritsa and Stinia the courier of Janina. You should attack, if possible, the courier of Castoria in the region of Davla.

"On the 3rd five companions of Dimko were killed at the village Potoros.

"On the 25th the band of Likvesh had a successful collision with the troops. The band, though surrounded by the troops, succeeded in escaping, leaving on the spot three or four bodies. The troops had 20 to 30 killed.

"Try to open a channel in the region of Florina in order to make our correspondence easier.

"P. CHRISTOFF, *of the liva (sic) Committee.*"

In order to illustrate the tactics of the Internal Organisation as regards the Albanians more fully, I will insert here another letter which reached me through a Greek channel. It will be seen that Greece is the one enemy; the Rumanian and Albanian elements are less dangerous to Bulgarian ambition.

#### MACEDONIA IN ARMS

CAZA OF FLORINA.

TO THE MUCHTAR, MAYOR, PRIESTS, AND PRELATES OF  
BELKAMENI

INHABITANTS OF BELKAMENI,

We are morally forced to threaten you for your having taken a bad road by joining hands with the Greek Antartes, who are composed of the most foul elements, and who, under the pretext that they are fighting for the sake of freedom, are slaughtering our real Bulgars, both great and small, with those savage instincts so common in decayed Greece. It is this pretty crowd who have terrorised the Bulgarian and Rumanian populations of Macedonia, and forced them

to become Greeks. Luckily your brigands were late in coming, otherwise they would have found the inhabitants entirely exhausted from the effects of the revolution, but now they have regained courage and they have commenced to make a stand against the Greeks.

Carefully note that I intend *to kill*, yes, *to slaughter*, every one of you who do not repent, for your action or for your error in becoming the followers of the brigand Antartes, who have polluted their names in the eyes of the European world. You must immediately send your representatives to us here, in order that we may come to some understanding, for if you do not decide to join with us, *a terrible, yes, most terrible, fate awaits you all. We shall wipe you off the face of the earth. Nor will it be made possible for you to escape our wrath. Wherever you may go we will track you down and you will fall into our hands.*

You are not GREEKS, but *Rumanians and Albanians*; it is *not* our desire to convert you into Bulgars. Shame on you, to throw away your real nationality. Remember that you have brothers like yourselves who are fighting for the causes of their nations; *the Rumanian and Albanian bands are brotherly united with us, and we work in one accord.* It is those Greek Antartes who have spoiled the symphony, and deceived you; and if you do not mean to understand again that you are *Rumanians and Albanians*, and NOT GREEKS, you will very quickly have to *suffer for it, seeing that a frightful fate awaits you.* Well, then, don't hesitate; join hands with us, if you do not wish all *to perish.* This we are warning you of for the very last time. So beware.

*The Voivode of the District.*

(Sgd.) DJOLE.

L. S.

*Private.*

*In the Forest of Bino.*

The most interesting paper among those for which I am indebted to the courtesy of Hilmi Pasha is the report of a French officer of gendarmery to his commander at Serres, describing the destruction of a village which seems to have been one of the principal

arsenals and meeting-places of the Bulgarian bands in that region.

While it does not pretend to be the work of an eye-witness, the description is so close and vivid that it produces all the effect of a personal narrative. We seem to hear the stealthy piercing of the wall behind the lieutenant of gendarmes, and to see the protruding rifle-barrels. The picture of the burning village, flaring away all night, amid the crackle of concealed ammunition, and the crash of hidden bombs, is a true snapshot of the Folk War, more realistic than many photographs.

"SERRES, *August 19, 1907.*

"CAPTAIN SARROU TO COLONEL VÉRAND, CHIEF OF THE  
FRENCH MISSION IN MACEDONIA, AT SERRES

"MY COLONEL,

"I have the honour to render you a report of the inquiry I have made on the subject of the encounter at Déré-Muslim.

"On Monday morning, the 12th of August, the gendarme of Melnik, Youssouf, escorted by a dozen soldiers, arrived at the village of Déré-Muslim, situated in the gorge of Melnik, and at twenty minutes to the south of that town. To execute his patrol duty he left his escort in the gorge and mounted to the village by the little path which leads to the top of the cliff on which Déré-Muslim is situated, and which overhangs the ravine by a hundred feet. There he found the mukhtar and elders, and asked them if they had anything to report. They replied in the negative, but looked at each other with an air of anxiety. The gendarme had a vague suspicion, but he contented himself with asking the mukhtar to affix his seal to the patrol-book, thereby certifying his declaration in writing. He then continued on his round of the villages.

"In the afternoon the government [the authority in Melnik ?] was warned that three Bulgarian bands under the command of three leaders, Tzodomir, Mitzo Vranali, and Mitzo Marikostinali, had been lying since the night before in the village of Déré-Muslim.

The total number of these three bands was thirty men. They had passed the two previous days at Déré-Mantza, a village opposite, on the other bank of the gorge; they were engaged in collecting money. The government at once notified the military authority and the gendarmery. A detachment of 150 soldiers and 9 gendarmes was immediately sent to the village. The Melnik lieutenant of gendarmery, Salih Agha, took command of the operations. He left the town at three o'clock in the afternoon, and at half-past three the village was surrounded by a triple cordon of soldiers. The dispositions taken to secure the Comitadjis were excellent and rapidly carried out: they were conceived and executed by the lieutenant of gendarmery, by the confession of the officers present themselves.

"Directly after, the lieutenant of gendarmery, accompanied by the muavin, a police agent, a gendarme, and some soldiers, called the elders together and advised them to tell the truth. He told them that he knew the Comitadjis were in the village, that measures were already taken to prevent their escape, and that he wanted them to persuade these latter to surrender, because, he added, if not there would be much bloodshed on both sides, which he wished to avoid if possible. The villagers declared that they knew nothing. The lieutenant then ordered that all the inhabitants should come out of their houses and gather to the north of the village. A certain number of men, women, and children decided to leave their dwellings.

"The lieutenant, Salih Agha, remarked in the crowd of villagers one old man who seemed disposed to aid him. After having spoken to four or five other persons, so as not to betray him [not to betray the fact that they understood each other], the lieutenant ordered this old man to lead the way. He began to search the houses. The first house contained nothing suspicious. As they approached the second shots were fired on the representatives of the law, and one ball struck the unfortunate old man whom the lieutenant had chosen as guide. The firing now took place on both sides; soldiers and Comitadjis shot at nearly point-blank range. However, the gendarmes

and soldiers, exposed in the middle of the lane, sought to shelter themselves as they best could from the shots of their adversaries, concealed in the house and almost invisible: they even scarcely fired, because it was difficult for them to see the Comitadjis.

"At one moment one of the Comitadjis said that he wished to surrender. A villager who was following the lieutenant of gendarmery undertook to encourage this man to surrender. He knocked at the door, gave his name, and opened the door. In the same instant he received a bullet coming from inside which struck him in the left thigh. The lieutenant of gendarmery had previously noticed that one of the Comitadjis standing by the entrance had fixed his bayonet, and he himself had done the same. When he saw the wretched peasant who had opened the door fall in front of him, he found himself face to face with the Comitadji, who tried to sally out, making his way with the fixed bayonet. The lieutenant swiftly thrust him in the belly, and the bullets of the soldiers finished him immediately after. In this fight at hand to hand the other Comitadjis directed their blows against the lieutenant Salih Agha, and one ball pierced the left leg of his trousers, another slightly wounded his left arm, and a third broke his bayonet. Without losing his head, he took the bayonet of the Comitadji whom he had just killed and thus replaced his own. The Comitadjis who had fired on him and his comrades numbered seven or eight. Almost at the same time they launched a bomb which caused a movement of retreat on the part of the soldiers, while it set on fire the house occupied by the insurgents. These latter seized this instant to gain the roof of the house, and to pass from roof to roof to six houses away. There they recommenced firing, and killed a soldier. By this time, firing was going on on all sides. Shots and bombs came from the houses.

"The Comitadji who had just been killed by the lieutenant Salih Agha was the band leader Tzondomir; he wore a beard. His body was carried by the soldiers to the river-bed to prevent its being burned by the conflagration. Some papers were found on him.

"The band leader Mitzo Marikostinali, who also wore a beard, was lurking in the last house of the

village, situated to the south, and at the edge of the cliff. He sallied out at a given moment, and tried to escape. But the soldiers posted in the ravine fired on him, and killed him. The third chief, Mitzo Vranali, had posted himself on the top of a bake-house. During the combat a man named Mehmed Sadik (formerly Stoyannof) shot at and wounded him. In spite of his wound he continued fighting, and refused to surrender. The lieutenant, being notified, approached him, and urged him to surrender, but in vain. He then aimed at him, and finished him off, for fear of his doing more injury if he spared him longer. The soldiers took away his weapon—a Mannlicher—and carried him to the gorge beside the other corpses. It was now six o'clock. The conflagration had consumed half the village. From the centre it spread northwards and southwards. Bombs went off in the burning houses, some of them with a louder explosion than a cannon, following on which the roofs were seen rising in the air and descending in ruins, dragging the walls with them. It is believed that the greater part of these bombs were concealed in the walls, and that their explosion was caused by the fire. In addition the numerous reservoirs of alcohol contained in some of the houses assisted the fire to spread. The lieutenant of gendarmery, aided by the soldiers, tried to preserve one house, but without success.

"It was six o'clock when the mukhtar of the year before and two villagers came to greet the lieutenant of gendarmery. He rebuked them, saying, 'You see all the mischief you have caused by not listening to my advice.' At that instant two shots came from a neighbouring house. The former mukhtar, addressing the lieutenant, said, 'I am going to try to persuade them to surrender.' 'Don't go,' he replied, 'they might kill you.' But without listening to the officer's advice he went to the house, opened the door, and in the same moment received a bullet right in the mouth, and fell dead. The lieutenant, seeing that the fire would burn this corpse, tried, with the aid of some soldiers and villagers, to withdraw it, but could not succeed.

"A moment after this officer was notified of the

death of the gendarme Mustapha. He went to the spot where he had fallen, and found him lying beside a soldier. Both had been shot in the head almost at the barrel end, and had fallen dead one after the other. The lieutenant was most anxious to draw off the body of Mustapha, which the flames had already begun to burn. He tried himself by going down on all fours to reach it, but the Comitadjis fired on him, and would not let him stretch out far enough. He then handed over the task to two gendarmes and some soldiers, while he held the insurgents in check by firing at them.

"He now found himself between the flames and the fire of the Comitadjis. He was leaning against the wall of a house behind his back, which he believed to be empty, when he realised that some one inside was trying to pierce holes in it with bayonets to shoot through. He let them go on, and when he saw the hole made he fired through it, and heard a cry of suffering come from inside.

"At that instant Mehmed Sadik called out to the lieutenant, 'Come away from there, Salih Agha! There are Comitadjis close to you—come away!' Soon after these words he received a bullet which penetrated his cheek and came out through the mouth. He was in the middle of the gorge at this time, and a hundred and fifty yards from the house whence the shot was fired. It was more than half-past six.

The fight lasted another half-hour, the defenders letting themselves be buried under the ruins of the burning houses rather than surrender. Some villagers found themselves shut up in the houses, between the fire of the Comitadjis and soldiers and the flames of the conflagration. They dared not go out, whether because they feared the shots, or because the Comitadjis would not let them escape. Some Turkish officers and many other persons have assured me that the Comitadjis forbade the men, and even the women and children, to leave the houses, insisting that the villagers should share their fate. It may be that the insurgents meant to take vengeance for the treason of which they had been the victims.

"At seven o'clock the fight was over. Three-quarters of the village was consumed by the flames. But the

conflagration continued its work of destruction till one o'clock in the morning. The whole night the village was burning, and bombs were going off all the time, sometimes with a tremendous noise. The sound of the explosions was distinctly heard at Melnik. The lieutenant of gendarmery estimates at about fifty the number of large bombs, whose detonation he compares to that of great pieces of artillery, and at 200 the number of smaller bombs. In addition there was heard every moment the sound of a crackling like a fusillade: this was the explosion of the ammunition for the rifles. It was especially in a new-built house, a little apart from the others, that the most numerous and the loudest explosions were heard. The Turks suppose that in this village there had been accumulated a store of ammunition, bombs, and explosives of all kinds. Personally, I am strongly inclined to believe it. This village forms a little fortress on the road habitually taken by the Comitadjis for Leonica, Cereznica, Slave, Hotovo, Déré-Muslim, Déré-Mantza, Susica, etc., etc., and commands a series of valleys very suited to the work of the revolutionaries. Moreover, its nearness to the town of Melnik renders its situation more important.

In the morning, as soon as it was day, an inspection was made of the ground. The bodies of the three chiefs and of two of the villagers were discovered, but these latter were completely unrecognisable, the fire having half burned them. One had beside him a Mannlicher, and the other a Berdan. But six villagers in all were missing, the other four bodies left in the houses having been burned, and buried in the ruins. There were also six inhabitants wounded—three men and three women. [I omit the names, and descriptions of the wounds.] The doctors from Melnik having declared that they had not the means to heal two of the wounded, the authorities, on my advice, have given orders for sending them to the Turkish hospital of Salonika, where they are now.

"On the side of the Turks there were two soldiers killed and two wounded, one gendarme killed, and the lieutenant of gendarmery slightly wounded.

"According to the information of the Turkish authorities, these three bands had joined together



with the intention of attacking, on the day they were surrounded, the post coming from Djoumai-Bala, and with it all the Greeks coming back from the market of Cotrivatch. While waiting, the Comitadjis, divided into three groups, levied a tax at the rate of three shillings a head for the poor, including women and children, and five pounds for the rich. The unmarried men did not pay the tax, but were given rifles and compelled to march at the first order. In the villages of the plain of Melnik they took twelve shillings for each pair of oxen. In addition, each village, according to its importance, had to pay a tithe varying between 1,000 and 4,000 okes of grain; but the tithe was taken in money at the rate of one piastre for an oke. [That means that each village paid from £10 to £40 sterling.]

"The lieutenant of gendarmery assigns a loftier aim to this meeting of bands. It should have had the more important object of closing the pass of Demi-Hissar, near Roppel, and that of Cresna. During that time one party of the Comitadjis would have burned a certain number of villages. Other information, coming from a person generally very accurately informed, is to the effect that Sandanski, at the head of eighty Comitadjis, was going to join these three small bands in order to perform some striking deed.

"On the bodies of the three chiefs killed at Déré-Muslim a number of papers were found. It appears that the most important were lost during the fight, but there is some hope of recovering them. Some of the papers have been shown to me; among others, five death-sentences, in the name of the chief Mitzo Marikostinali, and coming from the Internal Organisation. Of these five sentences two have been already carried out; among those that remain there is one against the Bulgarian priest of Ploska, a village hostile to the Internal Organisation.

"As regards the number of thirty Comitadjis, given by the Turkish authorities, I have been unable to verify it, for all the bodies have been burned and buried under the ruins. They are still smoking, and render a search impossible. Meanwhile a certain number of rifles have been found. [He enumerates thirteen.] The authorities hope to find more when the ruins can be searched; if they fail, the number of

Comitadjis cannot have exceeded thirteen, and my conviction is that some of these rifles belonged to the peasants, which would make the number less.

"In casting one's eyes now on the little plateau to the north of the village, one is painfully impressed by all the misery it exhibits. Two hundred and eighty men, women, and children are huddled together without shelter, without food, without money, and without other clothing than what they have on. The fire has devoured everything; they have nothing left. Of the forty-five houses of which the village was composed,<sup>1</sup> only six have been spared by the flames. With difficulty some coverings and furniture have been saved.

"On the day of the catastrophe the authorities sent some bread to these unfortunates. The peasants made me observe that the quantity of bread distributed to them was quite insufficient for so many mouths. I at once made the remark to the authorities, and the ration distributed was doubled. But it was still not enough.

"A commission, composed of the colonel of infantry commanding the garrison of Demi-Hissar and of the commandant Taïar Bey, chief of the gendarmery of the sandjak of Serres, has been sent to the spot. It arrived some time after me, and held an inquiry to fix the indemnity to be given to the peasants not compromised in this affair for the rebuilding of their houses. It fixed the indemnities, varying from £6 to £9, according to the size of the houses destroyed.

"I was able to go alone amongst the peasants, and they gave me to understand that the soldiers had themselves set fire to the houses; that the villagers killed had been killed by the soldiers, who had thrown the bodies into the fire; that the wounded had been hit by the bullets of the soldiers; that the soldiers had stolen their goods, and that Bashi-bazouks had taken part in the burning and pillage.

"After my investigation, I cannot believe these accusations. Besides, a great number of facts and circumstances militate in favour of the Turks. I found cartridges—Mannlicher, Berdan, etc.—pretty nearly

<sup>1</sup> On the basis of five persons to a house the population would be 225. It is actually 280, not counting those who perished. The vulgar estimates are clearly under the mark.

everywhere, which proves that the Comitadjis fired on the troops from all sides. For the rest, the villagers to whom I pointed this out admitted to me that the Comitadjis fled from house to house to avoid the fire. Granting that the Turks set fire to the houses to drive out the Comitadjis, they must have been obliged to do so in every direction. But the soldiers and the lieutenant of gendarmery assure me that the fire was caused by the bombs; now, it is very possible that they started the conflagration."

The remainder of the report is taken up with refuting the malicious accusations of the villagers, and with recording some instances of devotion on the part of the Turks.

"The police agent, Habit Effendi, saw that four villagers were shut up in a house that was already beginning to burn. They dared not come out in the midst of a rain of bullets. The agent of the police stopped the firing on the part of the troops, and thus succeeded in saving, not without peril, these four unfortunate villagers.

"Another police agent, Mehmet Said, went into a burning stable, to save an ass which was inside, when he saw a little infant of three or four months, abandoned, and already approached by the flames. He caught it up and came out carrying the child in his arms; he was greeted by the bullets of the Comitadjis one of which pierced the clothing of the child."

In reading this report allowance must be made for the very evident bias of the writer in favour of the Turks. At the same time it is difficult not to acquire a portion of that feeling after the perusal.

The first thing that must strike every reader is that the ferocious crew harboured in this village met a fate which they thoroughly deserved, in short the fate which they had come to inflict on others. According to one view of their operations they were concerting a massacre of Greeks; not an attack on a Greek band, but a massacre

of peasants returning from market. According to another view they aimed at burning a number of villages; that is to say, of course, Christian villages which refused to be taxed by the Internal Organisation. These recalcitrant villages may have been either Greek or Bulgarian; one of the death-warrants to be executed is against a Bulgarian priest. While they are waiting to carry out these atrocities, the Comitadjis are busy plundering the country-side.

The Bulgarian apologist has told us that his friends have as much right to act in this manner as any recognised Government has to levy taxes and punish traitors; but the Bulgarian view really is that they have much more right, and this view seems to have affected the mind of Captain Sarrou himself. The Comitadjis, being Christians and liberators, may burn offending villages if it pleases them to do so, but the Moslem authorities must not dare to follow their example. The French captain labours to exonerate his friends from the suspicion of having set fire to the houses from which they were being fired at by the wild beasts whom they had trapped. One is tempted to pronounce that the troops would have acted very weakly if they had hesitated for one moment to burn out this nest of scorpions.

It is difficult to feel much sympathy with the villagers. Either the Comitadjis had come among them as friends, or as tyrants. If they sheltered them willingly, it can only be said that they deserved to lose their homes. If unwillingly, what view can be taken of their behaviour in bringing complaints and accusations against the troops who had delivered them from such a scourge?

There is something utterly revolting to one's sense of justice about the whole episode. The Government is compelled to feed the victims of the Internal Organisation, and to give them funds to rebuild their houses, in order that they may serve again as arsenals of bombs, and as fortresses for murderers and

anarchists. That is turning the left cheek to the smiter, with a vengeance. With every desire to give credit to the Turks for humanity, I am compelled to attribute this excess of Christian charity to the dictation of the Powers, and of that public sentiment which supplies the Powers with driving force.

On such lines, it must be said again, the Folk War can never be brought to a close. If, instead of being rebuilt at the expense of the Government, villages like Déré-Muslim were sown with salt, and the inhabitants given the choice between emigration into Bulgaria and transportation to Armenia, there might be some prospect of peace.

As this chapter is made up of citations, I will close it with an extract from a French journalist, M. Michel Paillarés, who has made many expeditions to Macedonia, and has, from time to time, found himself on the scene of recent atrocities. I quote from his recently published volume, *L'Imbroglia Macédonien*.

"Michael Vassili, of Komanitchavo, recounts the scene which took place quite recently in his village. 'On the 16th of July' (1905), he tells us, 'more than eighty Comitadjis came and surrounded the house of my brother and myself. We defended ourselves for three hours with our rifles. When our ammunition was exhausted we hid ourselves in a neighbouring house. The Comitadjis, enraged at not finding us, threw themselves like wild beasts on our mother and on our aunt, aged eighty, and massacred them. Our mother received a shot from a revolver, and eighteen knife-thrusts. Then they killed my child, aged eight; they thrust it through here and there with a bayonet, and threw its corpse into a ditch.' The women who were present at this scene assert that the Comitadjis drank the blood which escaped from the wounds of young Vassili.

"The Italian officer engaged in reorganising the gendarmery of the *caza* confirms the narrative of Michael Vassili. However, he refuses to believe in such a monstrous detail as that the bandits drank the

blood of the child, although the testimony of the spectators is unanimous."

I will only add that I first found this gruesome episode narrated in a letter from the Greek Archbishop of the diocese to the Patriarch. Like the Italian officer, I hesitated to accept the charge of actual cannibalism, but I no longer feel able to pronounce such an act impossible on the part of the Folk. It is the Bulgarian poet, Bazoff, who has written :

"O my folk, I look on your face that suffering has rendered ferocious  
and inhuman, and I tremble !

Enslaved mothers have given thee birth.

The voice of pity is strange to thee, for cruelty is the deep element  
of thy life !"

## CHAPTER XVI

### "IN CAMERA"

Politics and truth—The captain of a Greek band—How the Folk War began—Operations of the Antartes—Feeling of the Macedonian Greeks—The way to end the Folk War—Turkish etiquette—The Albanists

THE present chapter represents a concession to hypocrisy, a thing more popular than truth in political, as in most other, circles. In the interests of political hypocrisy it is necessary that we should pretend not to know that the Greek and Bulgarian bands in Rumelia enjoy the approval and patronage of the Greek and Bulgarian Governments. We must feign ignorance of the fact that the Western missionaries in Turkey are in most cases engaged in spreading sedition against the Government, rather than in teaching their converts to render unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's. We must accept the conventional caricature of Abdul Hamid II. hung up in all the Christian schools as a genuine expression of affection for that sovereign on the part of the teachers and pupils. And, above all, we must hold ourselves ready to change and accommodate our beliefs on these and other subjects to the policy of our Government for the time being, lest we should find ourselves in the awkward position of having to choose between our interest and our conscience.

According to some foreign observers, the British nation does not often find itself in this last dilemma.

A Turkish statesman who enjoys a renown for sagacity remarked to me, "I have noticed that your ruling class can always make the people think what it wants them to think."

There is much truth in the observation. In spite of Parliament and the Press, there is probably no country at the present time in which the bureaucracy exercises such unchecked power as in England, and in which the influence of the public is so slight.

While Lord Elgin was at the Colonial Office the great self-governing Colonies demanded the appointment of a man of eminence, outside the permanent official staff, to deal with them. He replied by the appointment of a senior clerk, to whose name some honorific letters were added to dazzle the simple colonial mind. The appointment provoked an angry complaint from the Prime Minister of Australia, of which no one took any notice; and when Lord Elgin retired from office he was extolled in the newspapers for his loyalty, not to the empire, but to "the Department."<sup>1</sup>

If this Department-worship has survived the Boer War, it will probably survive the British Empire. I have every reason to congratulate myself on the fact that on the present occasion I am, as far as I can judge, on the side of the Department, but I should have been still better pleased if I had been drawing up this report for a public which was still master in its own house.

I shall now proceed to transcribe the evidence of some witnesses whose identity I have been requested to conceal either by themselves or by persons to whose judgment I defer.

The first is one of the best-known and most success-

<sup>1</sup> The late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman told Mr. Labouchere that he considered it the duty of a Minister to defend his Department "right or wrong." That principle has reduced the House of Commons to a legal fiction.



ful leaders of the Greek bands, who is known throughout Macedonia as "Captain Vardas." One of our Consuls, a gentleman whose information I found to be derived almost entirely from Bulgarian sources, represented that "Captain Vardas" was a young officer in the Greek Army who had been promoted from the grade of sub-lieutenant to lieutenant-colonel in two years, as a reward for having done little more than loaf about Salonika. When I interviewed "Captain Vardas," I found him actually wearing the uniform of a lieutenant of artillery. He is thirty-eight years of age, and he informed me that he had recently risen to the grade of lieutenant by seniority—not a very extravagant rate of promotion.

"Captain Vardas" is a native of Sphakia, in Crete, a district famous for its obstinate resistance to Turkish authority even at a time when the Turks were masters of the rest of the island. His portrait shows him to be what I found him in personal intercourse, a man of great courage united with great simplicity, with all the bright good-humour and playfulness of a boy. The contrast between this portrait and that of the Bulgarian Tchakalaroff, described by his own apologist as "cruel but capable," is typical of the contrast between the two peoples, their national aspirations, and their methods.

I spent a long and interesting evening with "Captain Vardas," taking down his story with the aid of a Greek friend who spoke English. The captain was delighted to give evidence—in fact, he ran on so freely that I was obliged to check him, like the judge in an English law-court, with the stern reminder that he must confine himself to answering my questions, a rebuke which left us no worse friends.

My notes read thus :

"I first went into Macedonia in November 1904.

"I was stirred up to go by reports of outrages being committed on Greeks. Refugees from Macedonia



"CAPTAIN VARDAS."



arrived in Athens, many of them former chiefs of Macedonian bands, who had been driven out by the Bulgars. These chiefs included Kotte of Riula, Dalipi of Gabres, Pavlos of Zelvovon, and others.

"These men came to Athens to say that Greek villages were being converted by force to Bulgarianism. They came to appeal for help, saying that the mere presence of a few Greeks from Greece would encourage the Macedonian population to return to the old faith.

"Paul of Zelvovon said to me: 'About the year 1900 the Bulgar-speaking villages were approached by Russian pedlars selling knives, scissors, and tooth-picks. They took notes in the towns and villages of how many spoke Greek, and how many Bulgarian; they came to study and get news. They tried to find whether the population favoured the Greeks or Bulgars, and to what limit the Bulgar-speaking zone extended.'"

In answer to my question, "Captain Vardas" here stated, "It was publicly known that these pedlars were Russians.

"'Some time after'—I resume the account given by Paul of Zelvovon to the captain—'agents from Bulgaria came into the centres, and began picking men and converting them to Bulgarian views by talking to them, and giving them money. They took advantage of any quarrel with the local priest to influence the people against the Greek Church. During this time they were helped by the officials of the Russian Consulates.

"'When a Bulgarian party was created, they began to preach love of freedom, and that the time had come to do away with Turkish misrule.

"'At that time the people suffered terribly from the Turks, much more than now. The Turkish landlords exercised the *droit de seigneur*. The Bashi-bazouks used to come into the villages and enjoy themselves at the expense of the inhabitants.

"'The Bulgarian partisans came all across the country into Greece itself. They taught the people to sing Bulgarian words to the Greek tunes of the War of Independence.

"'I (Pavlos) was a Bulgar-speaking Greek. I was a

convert to the Bulgarian party. The task given to me was to come into Greece, and bring arms."

Tchakalaroff himself, "Captain Vardas" stated, came to Athens at this time on the same errand. He had seen him dining in the well-known Averoff restaurant.

"I then noticed that as soon as a party was formed in a village, they demanded that the priest should preach in Bulgarian, instead of Greek.

"Next they demanded that the Greek priests should be replaced by Exarchists.

"In the schools they demanded that the Greek schoolmasters should go, and that Bulgarians should come.

"This was the signal for strife between the Patriarchists and Exarchists, who often came to blows. That was the state of things by 1902.

"I remember Deltchoff from Bulgaria coming to Konoblati and saying, "The Greek priests and schoolmasters are obstacles. The time has come to play the game for the Bulgarians. We are all Bulgars. We must work for Bulgaria, because she will come and help us to throw off the Turkish yoke."

"Yankoff, on the other hand, told the people, "Macedonia for the Macedonians." Sarafoff belonged to the Bulgarian party. Sandanski was for the Macedonian. Their differences were due to personal rivalry.

"I said, "You taught me to fight for freedom. Now you tell me to kill the Greek priests. How shall I kill Greek priests? I cannot do that, against my principles."

"I saw that they were disappointed with me. They meant to murder me.

"I went and told this to my comrades. I told the Archbishop of Castoria and the Greek Consul at Monastir. This was on the eve of the rising

"As a result my village has never turned Exarchist.

"From that moment dates the open assassination of all who would not embrace the Bulgarian idea."

Thus far Paul of Zelvovon. It is a perfectly simple and, I think no one can doubt, a perfectly truthful

explanation of how the Folk War developed. The foreign emissaries organised the Macedonian peasantry to fight against the Turks, and then ordered them to begin by butchering the Greeks. Those who refused were next marked out for slaughter themselves.

Their refusal seems to have been due to religious rather than political sentiment. But so is the whole crusade against the Turks due to religious sentiment. Before the arrival of the Russian pedlars on the scene, these peasants were neither Greeks nor Bulgars in any strong national sense. Their religion linked them with one country, and their speech with the other. They were ready to accept the flag of the country that promised to liberate them from the Moslem. When Bulgaria broke faith with them, and asked them to become assassins of their priests instead of soldiers against the Turks, they turned from her to Greece. It is then for the first time that the Greek Consul comes on the scene, and that the Greek kingdom is appealed to for protection, not against the ancient enemy, but against the new.

The narrative of Paul of Zelonon throws a light on the part played by the Archbishop of Castoria. We see him receiving this rough partisan, who comes to tell him, "I engaged to fight Turks; now they want me to kill Greek priests, and I cannot." The Archbishop threw his shield over the men who had refused to murder his clergy, and by so doing drew on himself the inextinguishable hate of Bulgaria and all her partisans, down to the English newspaper writers who have espoused the cause of Sandanski and Sarafoff.

The further evidence of "Captain Vardas" bears more directly on his own experiences.

"Greece was besieged by similar appeals. As a result, the Greeks gave arms to the refugees to be used against the Bulgarians, and not against the Turks.

"I was a friend of Melas, who wrote to me to come

and join him in Macedonia. I was getting ready to go when I heard of his death.

"I took with me thirty-five men, drawn from Macedonia, from Greece, and from other parts of Turkey. At first we lurked in the villages in the south of Macedonia, on account of the snow. They all spoke Greek as far north as Castoria. We urged them not to join the bands which were fighting for Bulgaria.

"I was commander of all the Greek bands in the district, some of which visited Slave-speaking villages.

"In the spring I advanced northwards.

"I was received as a liberator in all the Greek-speaking villages. They regarded me as having come to free them from the Bulgars for the time being, and later on from the Turks.

"Some of the villages were afraid to welcome us for fear of the Turks, who had burnt Bulgarian villages.

"Wherever we came we restored order, put down crimes, and promoted concord, acting as judges."

I asked the witness to describe an actual fight with the Comitadjis. "Captain Vardas" has had many of these, and has always come off victorious.

"On the 4th of December, 1904, we went to the village of Labissovon.

"Labissovon was oppressed by a Bulgarian committee, and a Bulgarian band was concealed there. Some of the villagers came to a Greek village near, to ask me to come and release them from the voivode. The leader of a Bulgarian band is so styled.

"We ran for one and a half hours from where we were to Labissovon. The villagers pointed out the house which contained the voivode and an armed band. We besieged the house. The Bulgarians fired on us, and wounded one man. I set fire to the house. They did not come out, and were all burned alive."

It will be noticed that the Greek band, called in by the villagers themselves to deliver them from their oppressors, is much less squeamish in its

methods than the Turkish soldiery under similar circumstances.

The Turks dare not set fire, or dare not admit that they set fire, to the hornets' nest. "Captain Vardas" pretends to no such false scruples. We can understand why the Antartes have been so much more successful than the regular troops, or the European gendarmes, in clearing the country of robbers and murderers.

"Three or four days before, the voivode had killed the headman of a neighbouring village, Bukhini, while making a collection"—*i.e.* levying forced taxes.

"I always gave orders to my followers not to hurt innocent men, nor women and children. Generally speaking, my orders were obeyed. The only instance in which my followers displeased me was at Zagoritzani. There we had a pitched battle with the Bulgarians, and some women got killed by accident."

The fight at Zagoritzani acquired a good deal of celebrity at the time, and caused "Captain Vardas" to be depicted in the Bulgarophile Press in the colours of an assassin. This village, or small town, was a Comitadji stronghold, and all the inhabitants were animated by the same ferocity as their champions. So bitter was their feeling that they would not exchange the salutation on the road which is customary even between Moslems and Christians. From Zagoritzani the Comitadjis devastated the surrounding countryside, like the Doones of Bagsworthy in Blackmore's famous tale. It was necessary to strike a blow at this fortress of terrorism, and "Captain Vardas" undertook the task. He marched into Zagoritzani, defeated the Comitadjis, and burned a quarter of the place. Since that time "Captain Vardas" has been described as if he were a Sarafoff or Sandanski—and the neighbourhood has enjoyed comparative peace.

"No torture or mutilation is ever practised by our men."



I pressed "Captain Vardas" on this point, and he admitted that some of the Macedonian peasants, acting under his orders, but at a distance, might have sometimes imitated the atrocities of their Bulgarian neighbours. The captain is in charge of a wide district, and he is not able to superintend in person all that goes on. He assured me, and I could not doubt him, that he always and everywhere gave the strictest orders on the subject, and that those orders were not transgressed in his presence or to his knowledge.

I asked the captain how he proceeded when entering a village which had been "converted" to Exarchism, or Bulgarianism.

"When I go into a converted village, I call the people together into the market-place, and tell them it was wrong to desert the old faith. If there is a Bulgarian priest, I send him away, unhurt, unless he makes a fuss, or is likely to tell the Turks about us."

One or two other scraps of evidence are worth noting.

"The Bulgarians did not confine themselves to murdering the priests. They killed off all the educated men, such as the chemists, as well."

It is the true character of the Folk War. It is the French Reign of Terror. It is the Jacquerie. When the Folk take to slaying their healers, we are witnessing the death-throes of civilisation.

"The Turks do their best to put down the bands. But it is impossible for them to succeed while the bands are supported by the population. *The people think the bands are a necessary evil.*"

And so the last remark of the Greek captain of Antartes echoed that of the Bulgarian Agent at Monastir. On that account it may be commended

to the thoughtful attention of the Turkish Government.

It is evident that there are a large number of villages in which the inhabitants, or a majority of them, are content to submit to the extortions and oppressions of the Comitadjis, either because they have already cowed the Moslem ruffians of the locality, or because they believe that the outcome of the present situation will be the removal of Turkish rule.

I do not think it can be contended that the Comitadjis treat their subjects better than the Turks formerly treated them. But they are "Christians," and they are Bulgars; and it is human nature to submit more cheerfully to oppression from men of the same race and creed than from foreigners and misbelievers. The Irish peasant who resorts to violence to escape paying his rent, pays the dues of his parish priest without a murmur.

If, therefore, the Internal Organisation (or, to use plainer language, the Bulgarian Government) had confined itself to setting up this reign of terror in the villages which partook of those sentiments, the excuses of its apologists in the Press would have some weight, at least in the judgment of those who call themselves Liberals. It is the attempt to extend its influence to other places against the will of the inhabitants that cannot be excused. It is that attempt which has brought men like "Captain Vardas" into the field, no doubt with the connivance and support of the Greek Government.

And it comes out clearly from the captain's evidence that the feeling of many of the Patriarchist villagers towards the Turks is nearly the same as that of the Exarchists. "Captain Vardas" himself does not regard the Turks as his enemies, for the moment. But the feeling of the villagers seems to be this: We want a band to help us against the Turks. We will not have a Bulgarian band, because they make

us change our religion, but we expect the Greek band to do for us what the Bulgarian bands are doing for their supporters.

This evidence must be read side by side with that which I collected from the villagers themselves at first hand. I was unable to elicit many serious complaints against the Turks, even when I was taking evidence *in camera* from pensioners of the Greek Government. I am inclined, therefore, to reconcile this apparent divergence by supposing that the feeling against the Turks rests at least as much on the racial and religious ground already referred to as on the ground of actual ill-treatment. In short, I am obliged to consider the grievance of the Rumelian Christians very largely a sentimental grievance—not the less serious on that account.

On a subsequent occasion I had a conversation with "Captain Vardas" and another Greek officer who has rendered important services in Macedonia, "Captain Athales Bouas." This latter was wounded in an encounter with a Bulgarian band near Batatsin, which lasted over eight hours and ended in the flight of the Comitadjis—one of the very few occasions on which they have ventured to face the Antartes in the field.

The two captains differed in their judgment of the attitude of the Turkish Government towards the Folk War. "Athales Bouas" thought they could end it in two months if they chose. "Vardas" thought it would take them much longer. I need scarcely say that I concur in the latter view. But "Vardas" considered that by far the best and quickest way to bring things to a close would be a coalition between the Government forces and the Greek Antartes—a view in which I also concurred, though the prospect of such a coalition seemed remote.

The description given to me by the two officers

of the hardships which they had to endure in their work throws much light on the causes of the Government failure. The whole of their marches have to be executed at night over rough and stony ground. They have no provisions but bread, and no drink but water. They sleep on the bare ground, in all weathers, sometimes passing days at a time without shelter, under a steadily pouring rain, till their clothes are sodden through, and they are well-nigh frozen. Similar hardships, of course, are endured by the opposing bands. It is not easy to imagine their being faced by the ordinary Turkish officer, and still less by the ordinary European one. If the Powers meant business with their gendarmery, they would have it officered by men like "Captain Vardas."

I should add that the pay of this officer comes to a little less than £70 a year, and he lives on his pay. He receives no extra remuneration for his work in Macedonia, and when in Athens occupies a humble lodging, in striking contrast with the mansions erected in Sofia by the Sarafoffs out of the plunder of Macedonian villages.

I think it was "Athales Bouas" who told me a quaint story of a search for concealed arms. A Macedonian Greek, who had four revolvers on his premises, returned to the house one day after a short journey, to find the kaimakam of the district seated on a chair in front of the door, surrounded by a body of gendarmes.

The kaimakam had arrived, no doubt on information received, to look for the revolvers, and was waiting for the householder's return to begin the search. It is against the Turkish rule (my informant explained) for the authorities to enter a house in which there is no man—a rule surely worth more than a passing exclamation! That little picture of the Turkish governor, surrounded by his police, seated patiently in front of the Christian's house, out of respect for

a sentiment which no European Christian shares or understands, is worth hanging beside some of those pictures of Turkish rule with which Europe is familiar.

The Greek opened the door in some trepidation, and the gendarmes ransacked the house without result. The kaimakam was departing when the householder, in gratitude for his courtesy, begged him to accept some refreshment. The Turk consented, and sat down again, while the lady of the house brought him coffee and sweetmeats. But the Greek noticed that his wife's manner was uneasy, and that she waited on the distinguished guest with a certain slowness and awkwardness. At length the kaimakam took his leave, and the mystery was explained. The lady had taken advantage of the delay in entering the house, to sew the four revolvers to the inside of her petticoats, and she feared that in approaching the visitor the concealed weapons might be heard rattling.

One wonders whether they did rattle, and whether Oriental scruples forbade the Turkish governor to hear the suspicious sound.

It came out in the course of conversation that one of the villages visited by me in the course of my mission had served as Vardas' headquarters during part of the summer. He described it with enthusiasm as being "as prosperous as the best European village." In fact, this officer seemed disposed to take a very moderate attitude on the subject of the Turks. He stated that he and his men never attacked Moslems, and always tried to avoid any encounter with the troops. The Comitadjis, on the other hand, he told me, murder Turks. He added that the voivodes in some places sent into the villages to demand that women should be brought to them.

From both officers I gathered some information on the subject of what they called the "Albanists." An Albanist is one who is desirous of seeing Albania

independent. A considerable number of Albanists, however, accept posts in the Turkish service; one kaimakam was named to me as an Albanist, and I gathered that he had some friendly intercourse with the Greek band leaders in his *caza*.

"Next to the Turks they like the Greeks," was said of the Albanians generally. "Athales Bouas" is himself an Albanian or Epirot—it is difficult to fix the line between the two—and as such is on friendly terms with Moslem Albanians. On one occasion, when he was passing with his band through a district where the Turkish troops were commanded by an Albanian, the commandant sent him a message inviting him to a friendly meeting. "Bouas" sent back the reply, "We can meet as friends elsewhere; here we are enemies. You do your duty to the Sultan; I shall do mine to King George; and do you catch me if you can."

"Athales Bouas" had had the experience of entertaining a Moslem friend on a visit to Athens. While he was there the host gave a beating to a servant who had stolen something, and the servant summoned him for assault. The officer was honourably acquitted, but his guest at once left him in indignation, refusing to stay longer in a country where a gentleman could not beat his own servant without being troubled by the police.

One is inclined to judge that this wild people is attracted to Greece by ties of blood, but to Turkey by its freer institutions and its pay. Religion turns the scale. "All Orthodox Albanians call themselves Greeks," said "Athales Bouas," in whose mind the words Albanian and Hellene are evidently not exclusive terms.

His case makes it easier to understand that of the Slave-speaking Patriarchists in the Macedonian vilayets. By the Hellenes, the name Hellene is taken to-day, as it was by Herodotus, not as a racial term, but a religious one, or rather as the

expression of a common culture. By race a man may be Pelasgian or Dorian, Slave or Albanian; but if he associates himself with the Greek Church, he is an Hellene, and the Greek kingdom becomes for him what the kingdom of Jerusalem was for the Jews.

But the Albanians, as is well known, are not only divided into Moslems and Hellenes; there is also the distinction between the Ghegs and the Tosks, the South and the North. And the Christians in the north are Roman Catholics. It is chiefly to them that Italy and Austria are addressing themselves in the search for political proselytes. According to "Athales Bouas," Austria is the most active and successful.

"But," he added with what may have been Gheg prejudice, "Northern Albania is too wild for any Government. The people pay no taxes; they are highland robbers."

Now that the prescription of a constitution and universal suffrage is to be tried in Albania, it will be interesting to see what happens.

I annex a report furnished to me on my return to Athens by the officer who defeated the efforts of the Bulgarian Comitadjis to use the territory of the Greek kingdom itself as a base for operations against the Greeks of Macedonia. It will be observed that these proceedings took place two years before any Greek band had come upon the scene.

#### REPORT OF LIEUTENANT S. SPYROMILLIO *re* BULGARIAN COMITADJIS CAPTURED IN 1903 IN THESSALY

During the month of December 1902, several rumours got about Athens about Bulgarians collecting in masses in the forests of the province of Trikkala. These rumours were confirmed by private information from individuals in Southern Macedonia to the Hellenic Government, which then decided to take the matter

well in hand, so as to examine the results of this propaganda carried on on the very soil of Greece.

It was ascertained that Bulgars and Slavophone Exarchists from Northern Macedonia, belonging to and acting under the instructions of the Macedonian Committee of Sofia, collected every winter in the woods of Trikala (forest of Kalambaka), and, aided by a few inhabitants of Thessaly of Slavonic extraction, after procuring the necessary arms, ammunition, and bombs with dynamite, were in the habit of crossing over into Macedonia during March and May disguised as woodcutters. Once they crossed the frontier, their main object was to oppress the Hellenic populations of Southern Macedonia, and, by the arms which they had procured in Greece itself, to try to force the Macedonians to abandon their Hellenic ideas and to embrace the Exarchate.

Upon this the Greek Government gave the necessary orders to the Prefect of Trikkala, and furthermore sent Lieutenant Spyromillio with a body of gendarmes to go to the spot and to capture these Comitadjis.

On the 7th of March, 1903, Lieutenant Spyromillio arrived at Trikkala, and, lying in ambush near the village of Koulvetsi, captured 33 Bulgars, armed to the teeth and carrying bombs, under a certain Poppofsky. These 33 Comitadjis were, by special order of the Sofia Committee, armed in Greece by this Poppofsky, a special envoy of the Committee, who, going all over Thessaly and having also come to Athens, purchased the required arms. Of the 33 Bulgars captured at Koulvetsi, the majority were wood-cutters supposed to be solely employed as such in the forests of northern Thessaly, and three were sub-officers of the Bulgarian Regular Army who had also served under Yankoff.

After cross-examination and careful investigation, it was proved that this regular service was being carried on in Thessaly by the Bulgars for a whole year, by means of a whole network of small centres from the frontier to the principal towns of Thessaly, and by means of mills along the borders of the River Penios, specially hired for this purpose by the agents and money of the Committee in Sofia.

The capture of the above 33 Comitadjis was followed by a second capture by the same lieutenant,



and later on by a third, such a keen chase being given to these bands that their equipment on Greek soil became in future impossible. The above-named leader, Poppofsky, was a few months after condemned by the Court of Assizes of Volo to eight years' hard labour, owing to his having taken part in the assassination of a Greek schoolmistress of the village of Smardesi.

(Sgd.) SPYRO SPYROMILLIO,  
*Lieutenant of the Greek Gendarmery.*

ATHENS,  
1st-14th February, 1908.

To MR. ALLEN UPWARD,  
30, *Smolenski Street*,  
*Phaleron.*

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE LAST OF THE CALIPHS

Turkish Constantinople—Izzet Pasha—The Grand Vizier—The German Protectorate—A communication from the Sultan—His Majesty's policy—Signs of revolution—Christianity and Islam—The evidence of Hamidian Progress—Smyrna—Work of the missionaries—Education

It had been my original desire to continue my journey westward across Epirus to the Adriatic, and a Turkish official whom I suspected of Albanist leanings had offered to accompany me. But various circumstances hindered me, and I therefore retraced my steps to Salonika, and from thence by sea to Constantinople.

I have described my failure to come into touch with any representatives of the ruling race on my first visit to the capital of Turkey. By this time I was provided with a letter of introduction from the Sheikh-ul-Islam of the British Isles, Quilliam Bey Effendi, whose own visit to Constantinople a year before was still fresh in the public mind. As an English Mohammedan, he was the object of a popular ovation among the Turks; the Sultan received him as his guest, and promised a commission in the Turkish army to the little son who accompanied him.

My introduction was to Sir Henry Woods, K.C.V.O., who holds the rank of a pasha and admiral of the Turkish empire, and whose kindness and hospitality

to English visitors are not the least important of his services to his adopted country. I was not able, of course, to look at things entirely from Woods Pasha's point of view, but I could not fail to be impressed by his loyal anxiety to put the character of Abdul Hamid II. before me in the fairest light ; while at the same time he was evidently aware that the men with whom the Sultan had surrounded himself were the chief obstacles to a better understanding between Turkey and England.

One of the first Turks to whom Sir Henry introduced me was Hakky Bey, Imperial Councillor, and Professor of Law in the University, who now holds the post of Minister of the Interior in the new Government, and has been put forward for that of Grand Vizier. It would be impossible to find a man who by his courage and breadth of view did more honour to all that is best in the Turkish character. In the course of one of our conversations I happened to mention that I had in earlier days cherished the ambition of writing a systematic digest of the laws of England, and that I had spent two years in framing the table of contents. "By that time you had done half the work," commented Hakky Bey—a remark that could not have been made by an ordinary man.

This eminent statesman spoke of the Turkish sovereign with singular frankness, and from a point of view which is probably that of the great body of moderate and sensible Turks. He attempted no defence of the worser features of the reign, but set them off against the services rendered to the national cause, comparing Abdul Hamid to Louis XI. of France.

"Louis XI. shut Cardinal Balue in an iron cage, but he founded the French State as it exists to-day. Now the incidents of his reign have passed away, but France remains. In the same way, when history

comes to consider the reign of Abdul Hamid II., she will overlook the little things, and recognise that he preserved Turkey as a country." Such, as nearly as I can recollect them, were Hakky Bey's words, which were sufficiently outspoken in the circumstances.

Another distinguished Turk whom I met in the Palace of Yildiz itself was Emin Bey. This official had formerly shared with the celebrated Izzet Pasha the personal confidence of the Sultan, who some years before requested the two to lay before him a scheme of reforms. They agreed on one which involved the appointment of a Grand Vizier whose name would have commanded the confidence of England and of Turkish Liberals. No sooner was this name mentioned than a frown on the Sultan's brow gave warning of his sentiments. Izzet, with the true instinct of a courtier, instantly shifted his ground, and threw over his colleague, whom he thus succeeded in ousting from the first place in the confidence of the sovereign. The cult of the jumping cat and its rewards are not confined to the politicians of constitutionally governed countries.

My own reception at Yildiz threw some light on the intrigues of which the Sultan was the centre.

I had been given to understand that I was indebted for much of the courtesy and the facilities extended to me during my journey to the Sultan's personal interest in my mission, an impression which was fully confirmed by a communication subsequently made to me on his Majesty's behalf. I had every reason, therefore, to expect as friendly a reception on the part of his Majesty's confidential minister as I had met with from Turks of all parties outside. On calling at the Palace, however, I found in Izzet Pasha the one Turk in Turkey who evidently did not feel any desire that his master or his country should be favourably represented to the British public; and had it been left to him, I should have quitted Constantinople without the Sultan

having been made aware of my presence or of the reception I had met with in his Palace.

The excuse subsequently put forward on the pasha's behalf was that he was suffering from domestic misfortunes at the time. His palace had just been burnt to the ground in consequence of his having installed a private cinematograph, and there was some doubt whether he could legally claim for the insurance under the circumstances. I may mention that the moment the news of this calamity was brought to the Sultan, his Majesty ordered two boxes to be packed with clothing of his own and carried to his favourite. It was fresh from the receipt of that mark of personal kindness that the Sultan's confidant did his best to create an unfriendly impression of his master in the mind of a foreign publicist.

Unfortunately, this was not the first incident of the kind. Mr. Frederic Harrison and Mr. Shaw Lefevre, with whose claims to consideration of course I do not presume to compare my own, were treated with very similar discourtesy. It is impossible not to connect such incidents with the rivalry between the influence of Great Britain at Constantinople and that of another Power.

In striking contrast with this manœuvre on the part of the trusted courtier was the very cordial welcome of the Grand Vizier, Ferid Pasha, to whom I feel the more bound to express my acknowledgments as he is no longer in power. His Highness invited me to dine with him—a compliment which, I was informed, had not before been extended to a European, even the foreign Ambassadors not being entertained by the Grand Vizier.

This title has been invested with such magic for Western ears by *The Arabian Nights*, that I should scarcely be excused for omitting all mention of such a function. Ferid Pasha resided in a palace known as Nichantash, in the quarter beyond Pera called the Target Ground, from its having been formerly a place

for archery practice. A sentry on horseback mounted guard at the door. His Highness received me in a small, plainly furnished cabinet, to which I was conducted through a suite of drawing-rooms, and from which we descended to the dining-room. The other guests were relatives of Ferid Pasha, or members of his official staff, and among them was a Greek bey who had held the post of Turkish Minister at Washington.

The dinner was European in character, but the Grand Vizier himself helped me to soup, as a mark of friendliness. We dined off silver plate, and wine was served in very beautiful glass. At the close of the meal we washed our hands in a brazen fountain which stood on the floor.

The conversation, which was chiefly confined to his Highness, the Greek guest, and myself, turned on the objects which had brought me into the country. Ferid Pasha mentioned the fact that he was an Albanian, and expressed himself as friendly to the Bulgars as a people, apart from their political activities. He was interested in what I had to tell him of the Moslems in my old province, but when I related that I had taken the Mohammedan Crown Prince of Lokoja into my house in the character of a page, he remarked that that seemed to lower him. I had to explain that the boy himself had solicited the position, and that I had been known in that part of the world as the "King-maker"—a title less formidable on the Niger than on the Bosphorus. Owing to the heavy amount of work he had to get through every day, the Grand Vizier was a very early riser, and knowing this, I took my leave about half-past nine.

The general impression which I gathered from the Turks with whom I conversed in Constantinople was much the same as that which I had gathered from the provincial pashas. There was a natural desire that England should revert to her former more friendly attitude towards the Turkish empire, and a belief that she would do so if her public were better informed.

There was an opinion, shared by Turks and Greeks alike, that our policy was to set up a Big Bulgaria, in the belief that such a State would make the best bulwark against a Russian advance, and a further opinion that our statesmen would find themselves deceived when the time came, the ties between Russia and Bulgaria being too strong for one to be anything but a satellite of the other.

I was struck by learning from one of my friends, on the staff of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, that he had come to the view that the most dangerous enemy of Turkey in the future would be, not Russia, but Germany. He considered that Germany was pushing Austria down towards Salonika and the Mediterranean, and that when the break-up of the Austrian empire arrived Germany would take over that part of her dominions. He also viewed with suspicion the development of German influence and enterprise in Asia Minor. He seemed to think that Germany, under cover of friendship, aspired to play a rôle in the Turkish empire not unlike that played by Great Britain in Egypt, and, in short, that her protection might easily develop into a protectorate.

These ideas are worth consideration. There is no doubt that the German Emperor is very generally looked upon by the Moslem world as a champion of Islam, if not an actual Mohammedan—I am told that the latter belief is cherished by the more ignorant class in Cairo. It is not impossible that the Commander of the Faithful may ultimately find such friendship rather embarrassing.

While I was in Constantinople I had the honour to receive a communication from a person in the confidence of the Sultan, one of the high officials of his Court, which I have every reason to regard as the expression of his Majesty's sentiments. I think it more respectful to give it exactly in the form in which it reached me, without taking the liberty of excising the gracious references to myself. It must

be read as expressing not merely the Sultan's personal sentiments, but those of all parties among the Turks, including that which has since seized the reins of government. The Young Turks desire civil freedom for themselves, and are willing to extend it to others, but on the ground of patriotism they and their sovereign are of one mind.

"The principle that governs the Sultan's Government is equality for all—no distinction to be made in the treatment of the various races under his sway. Since his accession to the throne he has ever shown he desired the welfare of all classes of his subjects alike, and that they should all live together in peace and friendship.

"At the commencement of these troubles between them they were exhorted to keep quiet, but, in spite of all the advice and counsel given, the Christian people have been fighting and massacring each other. His soldiers received instructions based on the principles stated above, and have done their duty without regard to any advantage to be gained by any one particular class of these rebellious subjects.

"Unfortunately there are several of the European Governments which have not observed the same principles of justice, and have not appreciated the conduct of the Turkish troops. All the counsel and all the pressure of these Governments have been directed towards us. Their pressure has not been exercised upon the Balkan Governments. In consequence of this attitude all the measures taken by his Imperial Majesty to restore tranquillity have been rendered more or less useless.

"It is evident that the question of Islamism is at the root of this matter, and that the motives by which these actions are governed is hostility to Islam.

"The legitimate rights of the Imperial Government, established by the subjugation of the country at the expense of Mohammedan bloodshed, are not taken into account.



"The English nation has always been considered as the people most friendly towards the Ottoman Government. Of this feeling the Sultan has had many proofs. I need only cite the Crimean War, when English blood was shed in defence of the interests of the Ottoman Government and of Turkey.

"If there were a good orator who knew the true history of these events, it would be a good work for him to destroy by his speeches and testimony the bad seed sown by Gladstone. He (the Sultan) would be much obliged if the English traveller who sees the truth would point out to the English people how harmful to the country by its baneful effect upon the various races is this great favouring of the Bulgarians. I repeat that in any case if only one per cent. of the pressure exercised upon us was brought to bear upon these malicious enemies of Turkey, undoubtedly the tranquillity of the country would be re-established.

"His Imperial Majesty is very pleased to hear that there is a gentleman imbued with friendly sympathies towards Islam who is ready to defend the rights of Turkey by showing the truth, and exposing for the appreciation of the public the atrocities committed by the Bulgarians. In this way, it would be seen how ill-founded and wrongfully directed are these efforts in favour of the Bulgarians, and they would consequently end.

"The Sultan proposed to Greek and other persons of authority in Macedonia to enter the Turkish army, and to defend conjointly with us (the Moslems) the peace of the country. This step, which has been repeated several times, has not been accepted.

"As a summing up—His Majesty's intentions and principles are unanimously directed towards legality for all the different races alike, without exception, and to follow up and punish without distinction all those who trouble the tranquillity of the country. He is delighted to have had the opportunity for confiding all these truths to Mr. Upward, whose great qualities and virtues have been vouched for by his General, Woods Pasha."

There is not a word in this document which does not correspond with the sentiments of the new Government. The only difference is that the Young Turks hope to succeed where the despotic régime failed.

Those who are best acquainted with the traditions of Oriental courts, and the reserve which has hitherto hedged the Caliphate, will see a remarkable sign of the times in this communication, in substance a defence of his administration addressed by the Commander of the Faithful to a Western democracy. Indeed, Abdul Hamid II. was probably the first man in his dominions to foresee the change which is now taking place. When one of his courtiers congratulated him on the defeat of his old enemy, Russia, in her war with Japan, he replied, "I have no reason to be pleased with the result of the war. It will, in all likelihood, bring about a revolution in Russia. The Tsar is the last absolute ruler in Europe, except myself, and anything that shakes his throne will shake mine as well."

While I was still in the country, cases occurred of troops mutinying and marching off to their homes, and of the inhabitants of a distant province seizing the telegraph office, placing themselves in direct communication with the Sultan, and demanding the dismissal of their governor, with success. The power was visibly slipping from the Sultan's hands, and he was probably less surprised than any one else when the crash came.

The immediate cause of the revolution, as of most other revolutions, was, of course, want of money. But it was evident on all sides that the march of ideas was becoming such that a change could not much longer be deferred. While in the capital I was taken to visit the Law School. I found Hakky Bey lecturing on the history of International Law. The course was a public one, and the large hall was crammed with standing listeners. An English gentleman staying in my hotel told me that the impression made upon him

by Constantinople was that of a dead city. If he could have been with me, and seen that eager crowd, drinking in information on a subject which in London would attract none but a few students, he might have thought otherwise.

The thirst for education was spreading even into the Imperial family. The Sultan's own brother-in-law had placed his son in the Robert College—a step by which the Sultan himself was deeply mortified, considering it a reflection on his own institutions.

Under these circumstances, it ought to be remarked that the communication given above does not strike the personal note. It contains no reference to any domestic differences between the Sultan and his subjects. Even the Christians of Macedonia are not complained of. The Sultan speaks as a patriot, and not as a sovereign, and his complaints are clearly directed against those very Powers whom the Young Turks, in their turn, will have to watch.

The general justice of those complaints is fully borne out by the evidence already before the reader. It must be evident to every one that if the Powers had been united in wishing to stop the Folk War in Rumelia, they would have struck at the head.

Formal remonstrances have been addressed, it is true, to the Bulgarian Government, whose Prime Minister was so deeply involved in the affairs of the "Internal Organisation." The sincerity of those remonstrances may be judged of by the effect which they have produced. I have had the experience of being chased by a British warship when I went to take food to the Cretans, who were fighting for freedom against the Turks. To-day the Bulgarians are fighting for booty and dominion against the Greeks, and the arm of England is paralysed.

Not less insincere is the pressure which the Turkish sovereign complains of as put on his Government. The Turk has been bidden to put down the bands, and he has been bidden to do it with one hand tied

behind his back. The bands themselves burn each other's villages without compunction or apology. The Turkish troops must elaborately defend themselves from the suspicion of setting fire to a house whose walls are pierced for rifles, and lined with bombs; and if it is burned by the anarchists themselves, the Turkish authorities must hasten to the spot with money to rebuild it, that it may serve again as a stronghold for their enemies.

It was not by such methods that the Boer War was brought to a close.

It is to be feared that the Commander of the Faithful has too much justice on his side when he attributes the partial action of the Powers to hostility to Islam. It is not necessary to credit the statesmen of Europe generally with the religious zeal of Gladstone. But there are too many Powers whose interest it is to take advantage of such a sentiment in the minds of the European populace. It is on that sentiment that the butchers who drank the blood of little Vassili rely, and do not rely in vain. The sympathy enjoyed by the "liberators" of Macedonia would be instantly withdrawn if they were Moslems fighting against Christians, instead of "Christians" pretending to fight against Moslems. The last shred of hypocrisy has now been torn away by the fact that the followers of Sandansky and other Bulgarian bands are still harrying the Greeks, whose own bands withdrew on the proclamation of the constitution.

It is hardly too much to say that the judgment formed on this whole question by the candid reader is likely to depend on the definition given by him to the word "Christian." In the many conversations I had with Moslems, not one of them had a harsh word to say against Christianity. Their point was that the religion of the man who skewers a child of eight on a bayonet, and puts his lips to its dripping blood, is not Christianity, or is not the Christianity of the Sermon on the Mount. In the eyes of these

Moslems it did not seem to furnish any palliation of the Bulgarian atrocities that the men who commit them show an abject respect for the regulations of their Church in such matters as the observance of Lent.

"They murder fasting," one pasha grimly remarked.

This is delicate ground, and I dread to say more lest I should seem to condemn these cannibals for what many pious and honourable men will consider a redeeming trait. I can only repeat that the question which seems to me to lie in the forefront is this very question, whether we should consider the butchers of little Vassili as our fellow-Christians, or as superstitious fiends whose assumption of the Christian name adds blasphemy to all their other crimes.

The most important piece of information contained in this document is that the Sultan repeatedly invited the Macedonian Greeks and other Christians to enter the Turkish army for the purpose of restoring peace, and that they refused the invitation. Such an invitation constitutes practically an anticipation of the action of the Young Turks in proposing to throw the army open to Christians. Such a refusal is the most decisive answer to the charge that "the Greeks took up arms to assist the Turks." The episode throws into relief the fact borne in upon me throughout my journey, that the obstacles to a good understanding between the rival creeds and races lay rather upon the side of the Christians than the Moslems. I may be permitted to say now that on my return to Athens I urged very strongly upon my Greek friends a policy of conciliation towards the Turks, and that some of those to whom that suggestion was least welcome at the time have since assured me of their hearty acceptance of it, under the new conditions.

Those conditions, I hope, render unnecessary any further apology on my part for the act of justice I

have ventured to perform in placing on record some of the better features of the government of Abdul Hamid II.

Let me add one other which came under my notice, as it were, by accident.

In the course of a tour of inspection of the educational institutions of Constantinople, under the obliging escort of Rechad Hikmet Bey, the Grand Vizier's secretary-interpreter, I expressed a wish to see a junior school. My guide responded by telling me that there was one close at hand in which a nephew of his own happened to attend. Accordingly he took me to see it, and it was only towards the close of my inspection that I learned that I was not going over a Government institution.

The director, or proprietor, Ismail Hakki, was born to be a schoolmaster, and his pride and interest in the school made this my most refreshing experience in Constantinople. He was evidently gratified by my visit, and determined that nothing should escape my notice. Time after time, when I thought I had seen all that there was to see, the director thought of some fresh wonder, and rushed me along a corridor or down a staircase to exhibit it.

And everything about the school was wonderful, even the name, which reads, in as literal a translation as I could get, the Hamidian Monument of Progress, or the Evidence of Hamidian Progress.

The boys were wonderful. The director took me through class after class, hurrying on the way, till at last we came to the class which contained the Bey's little nephew. The director suffered me to put a few questions to him, and then, without a word of warning, pounced upon a small boy of nine or ten, and dragged him to the front.

And the small boy proceeded to show off. He was a walking encyclopædia. With brows knitted in the frown of thought and eyes fixed on the ground, he recited the names of the Sultans, beginning with the

Seljukides. He threw in the names of the most famous Grand Viziers. From history he passed on to geography. After a brief review of the Turkish territories, he glanced at my own less-known country. He told me that the capital of England was London, situated on the river Thames, and that of Ireland, Dublin, on the Liffey. He further mentioned Liverpool and Manchester. From these dry subjects he branched off to literature, and recited a Turkish poem, still with the same brooding and almost misanthropic fixity of scowl. The poem ended, he answered a number of questions in arithmetic. Then he dropped into poetry once more, with the liberality of Mr. Wegg.

The director presided over the performance with a beaming countenance. If the infant prodigy showed signs of running down, he wound him up again with a question or two. When his vast stores of information had been fully displayed, the director rushed at him and drew a watch from his pocket. On the dial-plate it bore the name of the Evidence of Hamidian Progress. It was a prize bestowed upon the youthful savant. The director himself carried a similar watch, which he showed to me.

And what else did he not show to me? He carried me upstairs to see the bedrooms. There was one apart for the small boys, and beside it one for the matron in charge of them. I accuse the director of having wanted to show me her room, too. He showed me the dining-room, and he showed me the kitchen, and, if I recollect rightly, the cellar. He took me into his office and showed me the books of account, the diplomas of merit for the scholars, and his own diplomas in the shape of two letters, one from the Municipality of Stamboul, and another from the Minister of Education, thanking him for his philanthropic labours.

For this Turkish schoolmaster runs his school at a loss. The fees charged to the boarders are from £20 to £30 a year, according to the parents' means.

I asked Rechad Bey how the balance was met, and he told me that it came out of the director's own pocket.

And no expense is spared. There is no improvement designed in educational apparatus which is not instantly adopted in the Hamidian Monument of Progress. The director has developed other ideas of his own. On the wall of his room I saw hanging a photograph of boys in omnibuses. It was explained to me that these omnibuses are the property of the school. There are twelve of them, and they convey the younger day-boys to and from their homes.

The director showed me his sitting-room, and he showed me his bedroom. He showed me the masters' rooms as well. The school boasts a museum, and I am always oppressed by museums. I had got out of seeing the museum at Athens, although the efforts of my friends to take me to it were skilful and persistent. But the director meant me to see his museum, and I saw it. There was one case of stuffed birds which I tried to skip, but the director was careful, and I saw the stuffed birds. I offered to accept the photograph of the omnibuses as sufficient evidence of their existence, but the director was not that kind of man, and I saw the omnibuses. The omnibuses were drawn by horses, and I saw the horses. Altogether I do not think the director had enjoyed himself so much for years, and I enjoyed it almost as much as he did.

It is not enough to say that no expense has been spared on the school named after Abdul Hamid. No love has been spared.

From Constantinople I returned to Athens by way of Smyrna, to escape quarantine. Smyrna is one of the most prosperous and well-built cities of the Mediterranean, and it owes its prosperity chiefly to the Greeks, who form the most important element in the population. The rich hinterland which supplies



it with wealth is occupied by an agricultural population of Turks, and hence Smyrna affords a typical example of a mutual intercourse between the two races which ought to be equally beneficial to both.

I was agreeably surprised to find that in Smyrna the English language is much spoken, if not so much as French. This state of things must be attributed to the great missionary colleges, that of the Church of Scotland, directed by the Rev. James Murray, and the American "International College," under the Rev. Alexander MacLachlan. I had the pleasure of seeing both these gentlemen, who showed me every kindness.

Dr. Murray's scholars are chiefly drawn from the Armenians and Jews who form the poorer class of the population. In conversation he expressed the opinion that the best man in the country, as an individual, was the Turk, and the next best the Jew. He spoke in high terms of the late Vali of Smyrna, now Grand Vizier. "We were all sorry to lose our old governor."

But he was unable to accord the same praise to the Government system generally. "The country would be well off but for the Government," he remarked. And he gave me a long list of the taxes levied on the inhabitants of the city, including a tax on the labouring class for permission to work.

I observed that the streets through which we were walking contained no hovels, that I saw no bare-footed children, and, in short, no signs of misery.

"There is no misery in Smyrna," was the answer.

"Are not the poor here as well off as the poor in the East End of London?" I asked.

"*Much better off*," Mr. Murray said with the emphasis which I have marked. "They have a good climate and cheap food. Smyrna is not a bad town to live in."

Probably it is not the amount of taxation which gives rise to complaint, but the manner in which it

is levied. I had a strong suspicion that a Chancellor of the Turkish Exchequer, with the powers enjoyed by Sir Robert Hart in China, could have doubled the income of every Government officer in the Empire, from his Imperial Majesty downward, without increasing the burdens on the people.

Smyrna has been the scene of some activity on the part of the Young Turks, and a number of them had recently been arrested.

Mr. MacLachlan, I thought, was less disposed to be critical of the Government than his confrère. He even went so far as to observe, "There are many things which ought to be said on behalf of this Government which have not been said." I was glad to hear him repudiate on behalf of his college any desire to proselytise either Mohammedans or Eastern Christians. "Our aim is to educate them, and thus fit them to reform their own Churches from within." Surely the wisest and most hopeful policy!

Mr. MacLachlan told me with just pride that the International College is now self-supporting. It is chiefly resorted to by Greeks, but there are also a few Turkish pupils. The latter, however, came more or less by stealth, as the Government did not favour the attendance of Turks at a European school. He told me a story of one boy, now in a college in Constantinople, whose name was Ramsi Bey, but who was entered in the school register as Ramsay, to avert detection, and thus passed through his school life in the guise of a young Scot.

It argues no little liberality on the part of Turkish parents, as well as no slight eagerness for European education, that they should be willing to entrust their sons as boarders to institutions which, like the Robert College, boast of their Christian and Anglo-Saxon atmosphere. Apart from the question of atmosphere I was sometimes puzzled to grasp wherein consisted the superiority of the education given in the ordinary English school to that bestowed on the youthful Turk.

The thoughtless spirit in which things Turkish are sometimes criticised may be illustrated by a remark made to me by an English banker in Constantinople to whom I had described the Evidence of Hamidian Progress.

"Ah!" he responded, shaking his head, "all this Turkish education is only a pretence. What do they really teach the boys? What sort of history do they teach them? Why, they do not even teach them the history of the French Revolution!"

I was silenced. It was not till I came to reflect on the matter afterwards that it was gradually borne in upon me that the history of the French Revolution had formed no part of my own education, and further that the curriculum of the public school, presided over by a Doctor of Divinity, in which I studied various obsolete grammars, did not include the history of England.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE YOUNG TURKS

English Liberals and Turkish Reform—Two representatives of Young Turkey—Difficulties in the path—The Greeks—The Bulgars—Conduct and policy of the Reformed Government—The future

IN the introductory part of this volume I have quoted Ranke's observation that the Liberal Powers of Europe had been the enemies of emancipation in Turkey. Another foreign observer, Karl Blind, in an article in *The Fortnightly Review* for December, 1896, points out that in England it was the Liberal Party, and above all its great leader Gladstone, that chiefly contributed to the overthrow of the Turkish Constitution in 1876-8. He quotes Sir Henry Elliot, our Ambassador at Constantinople in those days, as saying, "It is, unfortunately, impossible altogether to exonerate this country [England] from having contributed to bring about its collapse."

The truth seems to be that Gladstone and his followers were so deeply inflamed against the Turks on religious as well as humanitarian grounds, that they failed to distinguish between the good and bad elements in the nation, and were unwilling to credit it with any capacity to reform from within. A similar scepticism is expressed in nearly every recent work dealing with the Balkan question. It is to be feared that those who have held such language have not sufficiently appreciated its effect in depressing the

spirit of Turkish Liberals, and strengthening the hands of the intractable Conservatives.

A very different spirit has marked the comments of the Liberal, and of course the Conservative, English Press on the present crisis. There appears a sincere disposition to support the new régime, and to extend to it every sympathy and encouragement. If that attitude is maintained, a new era may dawn on these distracted lands. But the Young Turks have all their troubles before them, and in order that their progress may be intelligently watched and wisely criticised, it will be needful to make great allowances for the internal difficulties of the new Government, and to accord it, perhaps, more than moral support against interference from without.

I have endeavoured to show that the revolution of 1908 is merely the consummation of a movement originated by the Sultans themselves nearly a century before, and inspired, like the similar revolution in Japan, by a desire to free the country from foreign control by placing it on a level with the European Powers. The progress of reform in Turkey has been interrupted and delayed, alternately by the prejudices of rulers and ruled, by the avowed hostility of Powers whose policy aimed at dismemberment, and by the disturbing influence of Western bigotry. But those very delays have contributed to the extraordinary ease and tranquillity with which the transfer of power was finally accomplished, to which there is hardly a parallel, unless it be in the English Restoration of 1660. The Young Turks must be tempted to say, with Charles II., "If we had known that the country was so ready to welcome us, we should have come back before."

In passing through Paris, after the triumph of the revolution, I had an opportunity of seeing two representatives of the party—Ahmed Riza Bey, who has for many years directed one of its chief organs, the *Mechveret*, and Musurus Ghikis Bey, an Ottoman

Greek. Both were packing up to go back to their native country, though both expressed their determination to adhere to the self-denying ordinance by which the revolutionary leaders have voluntarily renounced posts in the new administration for themselves. It is to be hoped, however, that this resolution will not be maintained too strictly, as Turkey has need of every honest man whom she can find at the present juncture.

Ahmed Riza is a man of too strongly individual a type for him to be taken as a representative of the party generally; and, in fact, there have been differences in the past between him and the other exiles in Europe. But their respect for his great abilities and sterling character has enabled him to continue working for the cause on a more or less independent footing. He is by conviction a Positivist, and has discarded the Moslem, or rather Eastern, practice of keeping his head covered indoors. But his immediate policy is that of the other leaders. It aims at the levelling of all racial and religious distinctions, and the bestowal of the full rights of Osmanli citizenship on the Christians, in exchange for their loyal acceptance of Osmanli nationality.

Musurus Ghikis, on behalf of the Greeks, was ready to accept the bargain. There was to be no more talk of unredeemed Hellas; the Greek inhabitants of the Turkish empire were to co-operate in maintaining its integrity against all comers, and to find a vent for their activities in the work of commerce and education. They were to "Hellenise the Turks." The closest bonds of friendship were to unite Turkey with the Greek kingdom, with the common object of maintaining the *status quo* in the Mediterranean.

Such a programme promises well; it is when it comes to be applied in detail that difficulties are likely to arise, of which one or two instances have already come to the surface. Those difficulties are of a character familiar enough in other countries. The

Turks naturally desire to strengthen the unity of the empire by the bond of a common language, the Greeks as naturally regard their language as their most precious possession. The new Government, while willing to improve and modernise the education in the primary schools, would like to see them attended by children of all creeds and races. The Greeks cling to their own institutions not less warmly than the Church of England to hers. The Greeks, with whom freedom is a passion, have not yet fully realised, it may be, the difference between civil and national freedom. The former is now conceded to them in ample measure; but as regards the latter, the whole spirit of the Turkish revolution must tend to make the new Government in some respects much less indulgent than the old. Even the question of military service involves that of conscription. It will cost an effort to the Christian peasant whom we have seen running with his troubles to the Greek Consul as his "father," to transfer his confidence and his allegiance to a Moslem kaimakam. The greatest tact, as well as the greatest good-will, will be needed on both sides to make such a complete change in the customs and traditions of five centuries.

It has been shown that the Christian of Turkey is sometimes unreasonable and intractable, and does not always know what he wants. For ages it was one of his chiefest grievances that he should be compelled to dress differently from the Turk. Under the rule of Abdul Hamid II. all classes were encouraged or required to wear the fez as a badge of common nationality, and immediately the Christian complained of having to wear the Moslem head-dress.

In spite of the undoubted sincerity with which the Greeks generally have adopted the attitude of Musurus Ghikis Bey, it is difficult to believe that the more purely Greek districts in Macedonia and the islands will not cherish dreams of autonomy and union with the free kingdom. Such aspirations have their root

in sentiment, and our own experience shows that they are independent of any considerations of good or ill government. In Cyprus, as formerly in the Ionian Islands, the Greek is no more resigned to British rule than to Turkish; indeed a Greek writer, in a Greek review intended for English readers, has contrasted the condition of the Greeks under Abdul Hamid II. favourably with their condition under Edward VII.:

"As regards the material prosperity of Cyprus, those who know the flourishing condition of certain Isles of the Greek Archipelago (Mitylene and Chios, for example), despite the Turkish rule, can feel nothing but sorrow for the state of Cyprus."<sup>1</sup>

As long as Europe is educated in reverence for the names of Miltiades and Leonidas, there will always be a certain inconsistency on our part in blaming their descendants for manifesting the same spirit. To all the arguments founded on interest the true Hellene will ever return the same reply as Ariel to the question "How now, moody, what wouldst thou?"—"My liberty!"

The difficulties to be overcome in the case of the Bulgars within and without the Turkish frontier may prove greater than those in the case of the Greeks. A diplomatic incident in Constantinople has already revealed that the vassal Principality is likely to find the little finger of the Young Turk in some respects thicker than the loins of Abdul Hamid II. The Greek kingdom has been taught prudence and moderation by hard experience. Bulgaria has so far met with nothing but success; she possesses an army which has cost her immense pains and money, which is unanimously praised by military experts, and which was certainly not created for defence merely. She has launched a formidable organisation in Macedonia, which has transferred a large part of the population to the Bulgarian Church by violent means—a result

<sup>1</sup> *Hellenic Herald*, November, 1907.



which the Turkish Government will find it difficult to recognise without stultifying itself and giving just umbrage to the Greeks. A general expectation has been created in the minds of this population of receiving autonomy as a first step towards union with the Principality. They, and their allies across the border, are now called upon to relinquish these ideas, and to combine with the Moslems and the Greeks under the banner of Ottomanism.

The first appeal of the Young Turks in the name of liberty evoked a cordial response on the part of Bulgars and Greeks alike. It would be ungenerous not to recognise the immense service thereby rendered to the constitutional cause, more especially in securing it the support of European opinion. The sight of Comitadji chiefs coming in to surrender themselves, of excursionists from the Principality flocking to Constantinople, and of Turkish excursionists being received with acclamations in Sofia, has staggered diplomacy, and silenced the malevolent for the time being.

Unfortunately, it is already evident that the truce is incomplete. The Young Turks appear to have accepted the alliance of the Internal Organisation against the Sultan's ministers, without insisting that the bands should everywhere disperse; and it would appear that such of them as are still on foot have neither ceased to levy forced contributions from their converts or victims, nor suspended their operations against the Patriarchate. It is by no means certain that the demand for Macedonian autonomy has been suspended, or that the Powers whose interests have been served by the agitation will now deprive it of their support. The foreign gendarmery officers, who quitted their posts in such haste on the first appearance of peace, have flocked back, and it is needless to state that the International Commission has continued in the exercise of its functions.

Now, it is precisely to defeat the demand for autonomy, and to get rid of these elements of foreign

control, that the Turkish people generally have rallied to the revolutionists with so much enthusiasm and unanimity. At a time when the more hot-headed members of the Young Turk party have been throwing out hints of redeeming provinces already lost to the empire, such as Bosnia, Cyprus, and even Crete, and the Liberal Grand Vizier has emphasised the position of free Bulgaria as a vassal State, it is impossible that the new Government should not exert itself in the direction of uniting the Macedonian vilayets more closely than ever with Constantinople.

Such are some of the rocks which it will call for the most careful statesmanship on the part of the new rulers of Turkey to avoid. Up to the present they have shown a wisdom and moderation which have amazed their critics and delighted their friends. It cannot weaken, and it may possibly strengthen, the hands of the party of conciliation, to remind the Turks generally that they will have to be judged, not by their intentions, but by their acts, and that it is premature for them to expect at the outset that full confidence which they may well hope to gain by a steady course of good government and liberal dealing with their Christian fellow-citizens.

The Young Turks, perhaps, are too much tempted to take for granted that fellowship which it is their mission to create. Some of them seem inclined to refer the whole blame for the past to the Sultan, and to say to the Christian population, "We have suffered equally with you." The Christians are clearly entitled to reply, "The Sultan was your Sultan, not ours. You have always had arms in your hands; we have not. You have overthrown the Government because it oppressed yourselves, and because it was too weak to resist those who were working for our emancipation. We are ready to condone the past, but we expect you to recognise that we have been the injured party, and that the first concessions must come from you."

If the Turks are able to recognise the justice of that position, they will not begin asking the Christians to close their schools and abandon the use of their language, until, by the firm establishment of the constitution, by the appointment of energetic and broad-minded administrators and upright judges, by the reform of the financial system, and the steady diffusion of orderly freedom and prosperity, they have established a claim on the confidence of all creeds and races, which mere professions or promises, however sincere, cannot entitle them to.

So far as an outsider can judge, the policy of the new Government is to do of its own accord what the old Government was being reluctantly coerced into doing by the Powers. The Turks appear thoroughly to appreciate the advantages conferred by the British administration on Egypt, and to desire to restore prosperity to their own country on similar lines, the chief distinction being that the European advisers whom they are summoning to their assistance will come as servants instead of masters. Like the Japanese, they quite rightly look forward to a time when Turkey will have enough native citizens to do the work of the country without foreign aid ; in the meantime, there are certain departments, particularly in the judicial and administrative work of those provinces which contain a large Christian population, where a European would be more likely to command general confidence than even the best-disposed native of whatever race or religion.

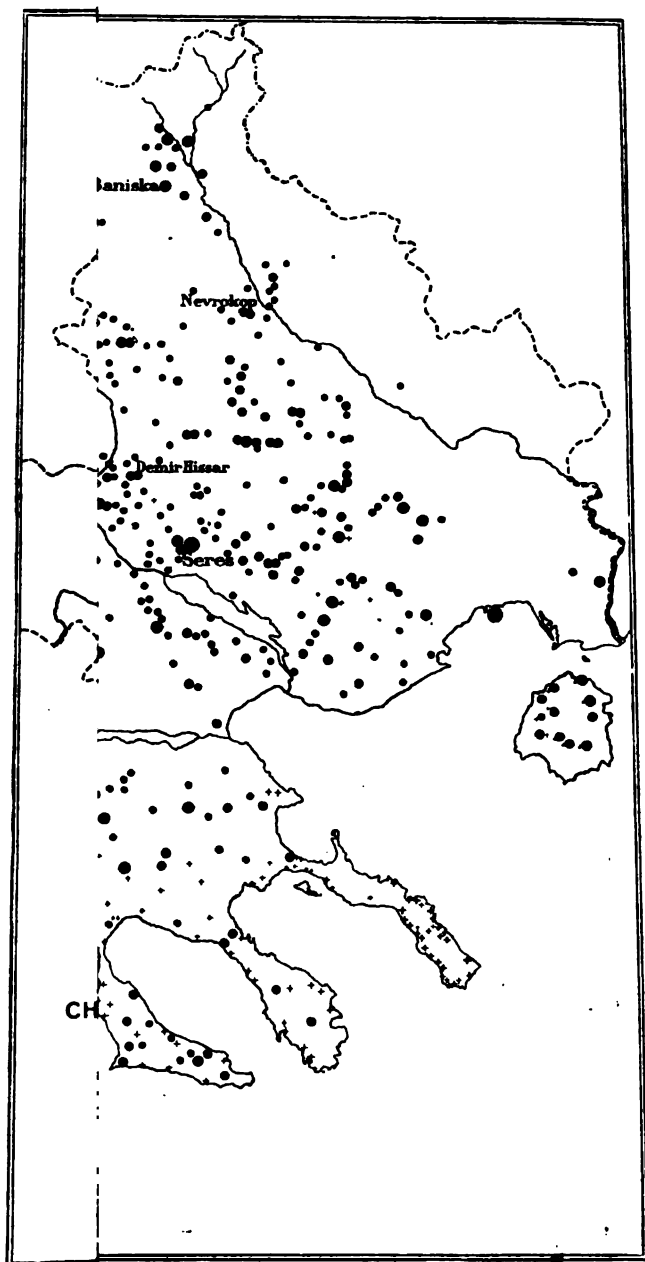
The reformed Government is already committed to the principle of decentralisation, which points in the direction of federalism ; but among all the federal constitutions which have been evolved in Switzerland, America, Germany, and elsewhere, there is not one which appears to me quite suited to the peculiar conditions of the Turkish empire. The Young Turks will be happily inspired if they do not pay too much deference to foreign precedents, which are strictly

geographical in character, but endeavour to work out a scheme more in accordance with their own traditions, which will take into account the racial and religious habits of the population. It is above all needful that such a scheme should not smell too strongly of the boulevards, and that in framing it less regard should be given to the ideals of the West than to the actual circumstances of the East. The immediate task of establishing concord and security may be rather hindered than helped by violent and inconsiderate attempts to bring about that millennium which even Europe has not yet completely attained.

It would be unfair, and it would be vain, to recommend these considerations to the Turks without pressing them even more strongly on the European friends of the Christian populations of Turkey. When we consider how little has been actually accomplished on behalf of the Armenians, the Greeks, or the Macedonians by the violent partisanship of their Western sympathisers during the last thirty years—even if that partisanship has not actually increased the sufferings of its objects—there can be no excuse for any one outside Turkey to say a word which can hinder the happy prospects of the new order. The more sympathy and support we extend to the Turk in his present efforts at reform, the better we shall serve the Armenian, the Bulgar, and the Greek, and the more weight we shall give to advice which will no longer be suspected.

Turkey is not the only empire which contains within its borders populations that aspire to an independence which their rulers consider would involve danger to the existing State from powerful rivals. It is that apprehension which weighs upon the nationalist aspirations of the Poles, the Croats, the Irish, and so many other struggling races; to overcome it by general and simultaneous action under a system of mutual guarantees will be the supreme triumph of international law and peace.







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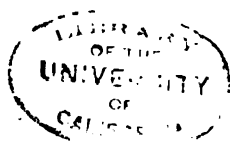


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